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The Shape of Things

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SOMETHING CALLED THE "THIRD BASKET" has found its way into the vocabularies if not the hearts of business men and tax lawyers. It is a new tax device, intended for snaring some of the bigger fry in the tax-avoidance game. For the last month or so it has been the object of a strenuous tug of war between the liberal and conservative groups on the Ways and Means Committee of the House, which has been preparing a revised tax measure. The "third basket" is a contrivance of Chairman Fred Vinson, who has been doing yeoman's work in defending the Administration's tax structure against one of the most high-powered drives in our legislative annals. Aimed at closely held, or "family," corporations—what the Treasury officials are in the habit of calling "rich men's pocket-books"—the "third basket" would levy a penalty tax up to 4 per cent on corporations which fail to distribute as much as 60 per cent of their profits in dividends. It would prevent some of our more substantial citizens from escaping a heavy surtax in their personal income returns by allowing their income to accumulate as reserves in these corporations. The irony of the whole business is that Mr. Vinson, who will probably succeed in salvaging the essential idea of the "third basket," was spurred to this ingenuity by the attack on the undistributed-profits tax. It will be remembered that this attack had behind it the battalions of big business, but was all carried on in the name of the small corporations. Well, the new tax bill provides for exemptions to ease the burden on the small fellows; and to make up the revenue the emphasis is shifted to the big fellows. Which proves what dire consequences may follow when rhetoric is taken seriously.

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THE OUTLINES OF THE GERMAN PICTURE ARE still blurred, but they are gradually coming into focus. There can be no doubt that the Nazi regime as a whole has been considerably weakened by the army purge, or that Hitler's own power has survived the immediate crisis and has even been increased by it. Between these two observations, however, there is a middle ground that shades off from analysis to mere conjecture. It is fairly clear that the crisis was by no means restricted to the army but was a national crisis, extending into the foreign office and embassies, the Cabinet, and the struc-

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ture of economic control. But the center of this radiating unrest was the army, and one may hazard a conjecture that the margin that separated a potentially successful army coup from an army purge was a slender one, and that on it hung the fate of the Nazi regime. Whether the removal of the generals at the top has really been sufficient to stabilize the army for the future, moreover, may be doubted. The replacing of conservative junkers by other junkers more sympathetic to the regime but by no means thoroughgoing Nazis looks like a palliative or a compromise rather than a clear victory for the party. Crucial in the situation is the question of the continued loyalty of the Reichswehr rank and file, and that cannot yet be answered. One thing can be said with definiteness. A totalitarian regime is not healthy, even in its own terms, if it continues to seek solutions for unrest by piling up more and more responsibility in the hands of a single man. The very fact that the regime is totalitarian imposes strains upon it that can only be met by the broadening of the bureaucratic base and by a growing process of converting the power of a man into the power of an institution. Hitler's regime seems to be moving in the opposite direction. And the fact that the Führer is preparing for new and dramatic decisions, or at least pronouncements, concerning foreign powers is an indication of his unstable hold on his followers and of the price he may have had to offer for his continuance in power.

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AFTER FIGHTING JAPAN TO A STANDSTILL for more than a month in the Lunghai railway zone, the main Chinese armies have been placed in a precarious position by the collapse of Wan Fu-lin's former Manchurian troops in northern Honan. Japanese soldiers advancing south along the Peiping-Hankow railway are reported to be within forty miles of Chengchow, the junction point of the two railways. Capture of this city would be a disaster of the first magnitude for China, since it would completely cut off the 400,000 crack troops which have been defending Hsuchow a hundred miles or so to the East. While China will probably have to surrender the Lunghai zone ultimately, it is highly important that it exact the maximum price for every square *li* evacuated. For time is working on the side of China. Both in the north and in the Yangtze valley guerrilla bands and small mobile armies are operating effectively against the invader. China is steadily receiving new supplies of munitions through Hongkong, while Japan is encountering increasing difficulties in obtaining raw materials. Much may depend, therefore, on Chiang's ability to hold Chengchow for a few more weeks, and upon his good judgment in ultimately withdrawing before it is too late.

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THE NEW FARM ACT PASSED BY CONGRESS contains 62,000 words; almost the size of a popular novel, it is a good deal less readable and more contradictory. Like its predecessors, this act satisfied no one, yet it stirred little effective revolt. It may be said to have made its way through Congress largely by default. What it amounts to, in effect, is an omnibus measure containing crop insurance, soil conservation, benefit payments, price-fixing loans. The crux of the bill lies in the crop-reduction provisions, which are linked with the ever-normal granary device: when the supply of cotton, corn, wheat, tobacco, or rice outstrips a "normal" amount, severe marketing quotas are allotted—unless one-third of the farmers object—and penalties are applied to their enforcement. The act has raised cries of regimentation, and there can be no doubt that it carries the principle of government control over production farther than it has ever been carried in America, and through a set of intricate and perplexing devices. The old Supreme Court would surely have held it unconstitutional; the new Supreme Court, if it validates it, will thereby show that it is really new. Yet those who raise the cry of regimentation and unconstitutionality are in a weak position, for the only alternative they offer is the Hoover anarchy, which can mean only the collapse of farm incomes. Admittedly the total effect of the present act is that the farmers, in return for some sort of income, paltry enough for most, subject themselves to a complicated network of regulation, the consumers pay higher prices, and the nation gets a decreased food supply. As economics this is childish; as politics it is transparent; yet given our present economy, little more could have been expected. We should love to know what Americans, looking back at this crazy-quilt a quarter of a century from now, will think of it.

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THE NATION HAS AT TIMES IN THE PAST leaned favorably toward the spirit of an equal-rights-for-women amendment. But the character and timing of the present agitation for the amendment puts it in a dubious light. The tendency of exploiting groups to dignify their acts with the language of "human rights" is a familiar one, and it is becoming ominously plain that the projected amendment fits into this pattern. Years of effort have finally established important legal safeguards for women workers in many states. Growing out of biological differences which are palpable enough for the Supreme Court to discern, this protection should not be readily relinquished. As progressive women leaders have emphasized, the amendment will jeopardize existing laws and confuse attempts for further legislation. It is worth recalling that the National Woman's Party, one of the most ardent supporters of the amendment, was quick to urge the Supreme Court to declare New York's minimum-wage law for women unconstitutional—presumably because it interfered with women's "right" to equal exploitation. There is little doubt that industry will gallantly seize the opportunity offered by this amendment. In the setting of the present drive against improved working conditions, nostalgia for sweatshop oppression will be heightened. Women long ago learned to beware of gifts from benign employers, even when the package was labeled "equal rights." They should apply the same caution to gifts from legislatures.

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A DEEP WRONG CAN NEVER BE RIGHTED when it has first been allowed to destroy a man's craft and blast his life. That is what happened to Professor William A. Schaper of Wisconsin, who on America's entrance into war in 1917 was summarily dismissed as "pro-German" by the regents of the University of Minnesota. He was denied all but the barest mockery of a hearing—a fact all the more startling when it is recalled that the dominant figure among the regents and the prime mover against Schaper was Pierce Butler, now Justice Butler of the United States Supreme Court. The regents voted several weeks ago to rescind the dismissal as unwarranted, to pay Dr. Schaper $5,000, and to make him professor emeritus. For him it can be only a welcome gesture; for them it is an act of conscience. But it is also more than that. The comments that we have read on the regents' action have missed an element that bulks large in its meaning. For the regents went beyond Schaper's case to place on record an admirable statement in the form of a six-point credo of academic freedom. This recognizes that the former members of the board acted in a time of great strain and hysteria, but it goes on to affirm, "in these calmer days and against another day of storm and stress," that it is in times of crisis that a strict adherence to academic freedom is most necessary. The guaranties contained in the credo might well form the basis of an academic Bill of Rights. Other college boards of trustees should not have to wait for a Schaper case of their own before following the example of Minnesota.

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HAVE YOU A FIRST-RATE PICCOLO PLAYER in your university? According to the thirty-second annual report of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, the familiar technique of bringing glory to the campus by persuading brawny athletes of very little brain to submit to a college education, with guaranties of a living wage and protection from the ancient grammars in the Latin Department, has been extended to tuba players, drum majors, and pretty girls. "Fraternities and sororities vie in recruiting students who can pay their bills [and the college bills?] and bring glory (in press notices) to a chapter." Joel Sayre celebrated in "Rackety-Rax" the practice of buying football teams for the greater glory of Alma Mater and the gate receipts. Now he can write a sequel about swing orchestras and pretty girls who know their Greek-letter fraternities. We have already composed the scene in which the college scout goes recruiting in Hollywood, with blue sound effects and an all—well, perhaps not all—star cast. The Carnegie Foundation is shocked and says such recruiting of the fair is unfair. But the foundation is behind the times. It thinks the function of a college is education, when everybody old enough to lift a saxophone or learn the words of a popular song knows it's a place where you dance the big apple and fool your profs by not learning anything. The foundation needs to get in step. A trombone test would do wonders in popularizing the college-board examinations. And may the best band win!

European Jig-Saw

KING CAROL'S revamped dictatorship in Rumania and the reported Austro-German pact have tipped the delicate balance of power in Europe to such an extent that only time can reveal how it will right itself. Although the new Rumanian government is likely to be as reactionary as that of Goga's in its domestic policies, it is expected to be somewhat more hesitant in tying Rumania irrevocably to the Rome-Berlin axis. This will be small comfort to the hundreds of thousands of terrorized Jews who still face the prospect of being driven from the country, but it may mean the difference between war and peace within the next twelve months. Rumania, though far from a great power, occupies a peculiarly strategic position. It furnishes a natural corridor between the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia. Its oil and wheat would be indispensable to Germany and Italy in a war against the democracies. Moreover, the disruption of the Little Entente would greatly add to the prestige of the fascist powers.

It is difficult to believe that the accession of Patriarch Miron Cristea will long check Rumania's drift away from the Little Entente toward the Rome-Berlin axis. As Premier, Tatarescu was clearly moving in that direction. The Hohenzollern Carol is notoriously pro-German, and is likely now to have far more influence on foreign policy than in the past. Nevertheless, it is evident that there will be no sharp break with France or the Little Entente such as Goga contemplated. And the failure of the Goga brand of fascism is bound to be felt wherever would-be Führers are making a bid for power. The atmosphere of pessimism reflected in German press comments on the Rumanian developments would indicate that the effects of the change may be far more important abroad than within Carol's kingdom.

Had it not been for Rumania the reported agreement between Hitler and Schuschnigg might have been a major coup for the Führer. But coming several days after the setback in Bucharest, it has undoubtedly lost part of its significance. If a permanent settlement of outstanding differences between the two countries has been reached—which is by no means certain—it should definitely strengthen Hitler's ties with Mussolini. It may also bring nearer the realization of Hitler's dream of a four-power European agreement directed against the Soviet Union. But this depends chiefly on the outcome of the struggle now going on within the British Cabinet. While it is reported that the Chamberlain-led Tories, who desire a settlement with Germany, have the upper hand over the Eden faction, it is not at all clear that Britain is prepared to reenact the Halifax fiasco. On the contrary, there is a possibility that the Nazi purge and the pact with Austria may so strengthen the bonds between Hitler and Mussolini that any general European settlement will be out of the question.

Somewhere in this European puzzle must be fitted Josef Stalin's letter to *Pravda* calling for the cooperation of the working classes of the world in the inevitable

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war that is to come. If the four-power pact were already in existence, such a statement might be interpreted as marking a fundamental shift in Soviet foreign policy. But dark as the situation is for all anti-fascists, there is little in the events of the last few days to justify such an interpretation. Collective action against fascist aggression is still within the realm of practical politics, and the Soviets are unlikely to abandon efforts to obtain cooperation until hope for such action is definitely lost. As it is, there is nothing in Stalin's statement which is likely to embarrass Litvinov in Geneva or to strengthen the hands of the Soviets' enemies abroad. It may, however, be interpreted as a warning that the U. S. S. R. will not be content to work with the democracies indefinitely unless they show some disposition to take a stand against the growing menace of fascism. Russia may ultimately find in the world situation, as the progressive forces have found in Spain, that when it comes to a crisis reliance can be placed solely on the working classes. But only a gross oversimplification of the present complex situation would suggest that another July 19 is already at hand.

Big-Navy Stuff

THE big-navy issue is leaving frayed and jittery nerves in its wake as it plows through Congress, the press, and the country. And the tragic thing about it all is that whichever way it is settled, it will have settled nothing. If the big-navy boys triumph, our course in foreign affairs will be more dangerous than ever; if they are beaten, we shall still have the problem of a positive program for peace, to the solution of which the big-navy discussion is contributing next to nothing.

Mr. Roosevelt is asking for an $800,000,000 naval construction program to supplement the regular appropriation of some half-billion. By realistic calculation, that means an increase in our effective naval strength of virtually 40 per cent. Anyone who has watched Mr. Roosevelt's thinking knows that this proposal flows organically from his bent toward sea power, and that he has not been averse to timing it to the growing anti-Japanese feeling here, to the slaps administered to our embassy officials and our national pride, to the Japanese refusal to stay within the treaty limits of naval building. This does not mean, however, that we question Mr. Roosevelt's sincerity, nor Senator Pittman's, nor Admiral Leahy's. There has been too much piffle written and spoken about sincerity in this case. There have been too many whisperings about a Jekyll-Hyde game that the President is supposed to be playing, and too much melodrama about the sinister commitments we are presumed to have made to Great Britain. All that is slightly hysterical devil-chasing. In politics what we know about the consequences of action counts for more than what we can guess about motive. And we know that a big-navy program cannot be peaceful in its consequences. We stand to lose everything by it and to gain nothing.

The Nation is flatly and unequivocally opposed to the Administration's big-navy plan because it smacks of militarism, because it increases the arms-race tension, because it invites war, because it is an economic waste, and because—if it is aimed at stopping fascist aggressions and building a structure of peace—it is exactly the wrong way to go about it. Whatever Admiral Leahy may say and believe about needing a navy to defend the Atlantic and Pacific coasts simultaneously, the shrewd sense of Americans tells them that the point is strained. A navy beyond the strength of our present one is not necessary for defense, and we do not want one big enough for aggression.

Where we differ from most of the people who have been appearing against the navy program before the Senate committee is that they oppose it as isolationists and we oppose it because we believe in collective security. The bulk of the opposition has come from the isolationists of both schools—the old, imperialist isolationists of the Hiram Johnson kind, and the new pacifist isolationists represented by the peace societies. The trouble with the collective-security supporters has been partly that they are not so well organized and partly that the big-navy proposal seems to hold out possibilities for fortifying the position of the democracies as against the fascist powers.

But nothing can be more dangerous than this fallacy, unless it be the fallacy that American isolationism would really cut us off from the problems of foreign policy. No healthy movement for collective security can possibly be built on the basis of militarist preparations and military sanctions. What Mr. Roosevelt is driving at is not too hard to discover. He is not at heart a war-monger. The clue to his policy is that he thinks he is steering a middle course between definite military sanctions on the one hand and complete isolationism on the other. He is, morever, tangled up with a bad Neutrality Act, which he is unwilling to open up all over again. He is accustomed to pragmatic waiting, and as events move along he wants to be in a position to adopt either a big-stick policy or complete withdrawal. For either course, he may well argue, an increased navy is a necessity. This is then, for him, the "middle way" in foreign policy. Yet actually it is the old system of armaments dressed up in new clothes. For there is no middle course here that does not become the old course. One may start out to follow a policy of the golden mean, but one ends up following the sea-power theory of Admiral Mahan and the sacred-war theory of Woodrow Wilson.

In foreign policy today we are faced with the necessity for adopting one or the other of two radical solutions—radical in the sense that they depart drastically from past practice. If a policy of complete isolationism were possible—which it is not; if America could really cut itself off from the world—which it cannot—then we should prefer that to the President's policy of indecision plus a big navy. But isolationism is not a policy; it is a reaction against the intolerable humiliation of having been taken in by the rhetoric of the World War. The other radical solution—difficult but possible—is to turn from the old diplomacy, the old armament races, the old war system, to a genuine policy of collective economic action. It is

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not, despite Professor Charles A. Beard's eloquent statement before the Senate committee, Europe itself with its centuries-old blood rust that we must turn away from. It is the war system and the armament system; and unless we can transform them in Europe they will entangle us here. To do this requires new energies, a willingness to use new methods. It requires a will to enter with the rest of the world into collective economic action to restrain the aggressors, and a determination to pursue that action only so long as it remains economic. America can show its bigness not by the size and number of its battleships, but by the boldness and scope of its efforts toward building a new system of collective security.

Instead of the big-navy stuff, we propose a threefold program: economic action with the other democracies in extending assistance to China and limiting Japan to its own economic resources; a conference for limiting armaments and stopping the arms race; and a renewed fight on the depression centering around the construction of public works instead of battleships.

Plowing a New Field

WITHIN the past three years two new springs of talent have sent up geysers among the artificial fountains of Broadway. The Federal Theater opened in New York in October, 1935. Since then it has chalked up an amazing record of innovation and success: the Harlem "Macbeth," "Murder in the Cathedral," "Dr. Faustus," "Power," "The Cradle Will Rock" (prepared but not produced under federal auspices). It has invented one important new form, the Living Newspaper. Today the current edition, "One Third of a Nation," is one of the most dramatic and interesting shows in town. And the Mercury Theater, of current sensation, is the first lineal descendant of the Federal Theater. The second spring has produced the hit revue "Pins and Needles," sponsored by the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union. Its freshness, humor, and distinctive flavor are authentic expressions of working-class experience and pride which have not heretofore figured in Broadway productions.

The two springs seem to be separate, but the social geologist need not search very far to discover that they come from one source. In the past few years, to put it briefly, a great new reservoir of creative energy in this country has been tapped, with the WPA projects and the Committee for Industrial Organization as the principal agents. The achievements of the WPA have been duly if not adequately celebrated by such journals as *The Nation*. The cultural significance of the C. I. O. and the problems it raises have not been sufficiently noted.

The activities of the C. I. O. have released the energies of millions who have for the first time taken part in a movement that touched their deepest interest. We have seen its results in the soaring figures of trade-union membership and in the wave of strikes. Politically, too, the effects have been clear. But Pennsylvania going Democratic was less significant as a factor in the reelection of President Roosevelt than as a sign of a spiritual revolution in the lives of thousands of steel workers. There are endless stories, some of them already grown into tall tales, to show that joy has come with the C. I. O. in the industrial towns.

The giant having been roused, the problem of guiding his energies and educating his desires is pressing. Among the newer unions the United Automobile Workers has shown much enterprise in educational work. It systematically sets funds aside for it, though the amount thus available is necessarily small, and thousands of its members attend classes or lectures. The union has also used WPA teachers, which suggests a cooperation between government relief programs and workers' education that should be widely extended. Certainly all the art projects would do well to give attention to the human and other materials gathered under the banner of the C. I. O. The union at this stage must necessarily confine itself to the elementals of trade unionism.

The word education has a dull sound, but workers' education is not dull in practice. In the Steel Workers' Organizing Committee, for instance, the prosaic rules of parliamentary procedure have actually opened the door to democracy in union meetings for many an inarticulate. The steel workers were organized by the miners, and the U. M. W. was never noted either for its educational work or for its democracy. In spite of enlightened leadership at the top and a vigorous rank and file, the lodges are more or less dominated by a conservative subleadership. The main impetus toward education here must come from such outside agencies as the Workers' Schools of western Pennsylvania. Sponsored by a group which includes in an unofficial capacity high officials of the C. I. O. and of individual unions, as well as local progressive leaders, this organization has no central plant but sends lecturers and teachers into the industrial towns. In cooperation with local union committees it arranges for forums and classes. Actual problems are discussed in what often amounts to a rehearsal for the next union meeting. An attempt in one lodge to handpick delegates for the steel convention was stopped by a rank-and-filer who had just found out that a motion could be tabled. "What they like best in practicing parliamentary procedure," an observer reports, "is appealing from the chair."

It will be a long time before the newer unions get around to the more strictly cultural phases of education. But a token of the rewards to be expected are available in the achievements of the federal art projects. "Pins and Needles" is not a happy accident but an end-product of a program of education which has been built up over a long period and which functions wherever the union has a local. The I. L. G. W. U. is well established and relatively prosperous. In the newer unions the present recession makes it hard to maintain, much less expand, even simple programs. Yet they must somehow be maintained. Gifts of money to specific enterprises are essential. Books are in great demand. The WPA should be pressed into service. The new field must be plowed. And the public has a responsibility.

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War Is in the Air

BY PAUL Y. ANDERSON

Washington, February 14

AMERICANS who want peace and don't want higher taxes had better rouse themselves to the shape which events are taking in Washington. During the last three weeks the martial spirit, needled by the navy's brass hats and nourished on notes to Japan, has grown with a speed almost incredible to those who recall the indifferent response to Roosevelt's "quarantine" speech and the calmness with which the country received the news and newsreels of the Panay sinking. Yet here it is, larger than life and four times as expensive. Like a man starting up in a bad dream, the Administration tears off its nightshirt and begins defending the country against invisible foes on both sides of the bed and across the footboard. The whole business has a nightmarish quality, but taxpayers will soon learn there is nothing unreal or comic about the expenditure of $800,000,000 for naval expansion. If and when they are reconciled to that prospect, let them reflect on the possibilities of the Vinson amendment, under which it would be our declared policy to maintain a navy sufficient to insure victory "in both oceans at the same time." If this is not sheer lunacy—or if it is—it could mean a Pacific fleet large enough to lick Japan's and an Atlantic fleet stronger than the combined naval forces of Germany, Italy, and whatever fascist allies they might hereafter acquire in South America. In short, if turned into reality, it would mean the largest navy in world history.

A significant and revealing feature of that part of the expansion program already authorized, as well as that merely proposed, is the increase in the number of battleships. It is significant and revealing for two reasons: battleships run into money—about $70,000,000 a throw at prevailing costs, which rise almost automatically once such a program is authorized; and battleships primarily are weapons of offense. Writing as one who has always rejected pacifism and now sees its folly convincingly demonstrated in the plight of China, I cannot believe that battleships contain the answer to the problem of defending this country. If the United States were a far-flung empire, the problem would be different. The defense of a self-contained nation involves the comprehensive employment of submarines, aircraft, mine-laying equipment, and powerful coast batteries. The powerlessness of a battle fleet to penetrate such defenses was amply demonstrated against the British navy by Germany and Turkey in the World War. Indeed, one authority has said that if a Pacific enemy ever became strong enough to attack our coast, the safest course to pursue with our battleships would be to hide them up the Columbia River. Right now official Washington is pervaded with startling rumors about a suppressed War Department report dealing with the results of the army bombing tests conducted against the Pacific fleet last August. Members of Congress who have asked for this report have been told the War Department wouldn't dare assume responsibility for causing it to become public. One of the rumors is that, under conditions of very low visibility, one battleship received nine direct hits from planes which the navy gunners never once sighted. One direct hit may be sufficient to cripple a battleship.

The truth is that neither our naval policy nor what appears momentarily to be our foreign policy makes sense except on the assumption that we have some kind of an understanding with Great Britain. With all due respect to Cordell Hull, it remains a fact that diplomatic denials are not worth a dime a dozen in any language. I haven't the slightest doubt that Arthur Krock of the New York *Times* was "expertly informed" of such an understanding, and the mass of circumstantial evidence pointing to its existence is conclusive. Why was it "vital to the interests and defense of the country" that Admiral Leahy refused to disclose the nature of the London conference between Captain Royal Ingersoll, chief of the War Plans Division, and the British Admiralty? Why, for similar reasons, did Anthony Eden decline to tell the House of Commons about the concert of action by the United States and Britain in the Orient? When the implication of those unanswered questions is considered in conjunction with the President's proposal that democratic countries impose a quarantine on aggressor nations, no mere diplomatic denial will erase the impression.

That is not all. More impressive still is the evidence supplied by the very nature of our naval program. Members of Congress who asked the Navy Department for information which justified the building of new battleships were furnished with a set of documents which included the Inskip report, *made by a subcommittee of the British Imperial Defense Committee in 1936,* dealing with the vulnerability of capital ships to air attack. The report freely admits that tests have shown battleships can be crippled and even sunk by air bombs. However, it emphasizes the necessity of battleships for protecting communications and trade routes *to preserve the empire.* One big-navy member of the House Committee on Naval Affairs was detected reinforcing his argument with a passage lifted verbatim from the Inskip report, except that he substituted "the country" for "the empire"!

Britain has a coast-defense problem. What is she doing about it? Building aircraft at a rate unprecedented in history and probably unequaled by any other country at this time. She also has a problem of empire defense, and to meet it she is building battleships and cruisers. This program apparently will enable her to cope with any chal-

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lenge which Germany and Italy may offer in European waters but not at the same time protect her interests in the Orient. That is where our new battleships would become useful under the terms of an "understanding" whereby Britain enforced "peace" in the Atlantic while we did our part in the Pacific. How snugly that would fit! And how snugly our new battleships would fit into the new British base at Singapore, formally opened today in the presence of three United States cruisers! Pieced together in that manner the picture puts a strange aspect on the navy's plan to "defend our coastline," but it does make sense.

The general tendency in Washington is to assume that the understanding exists simply as the result of conversations among British and American naval authorities, but the better-informed and more alert members of Congress do not share that opinion. For all Cordell Hull's high purposes and outward suavity they know him at heart to be a tough old Tennessee mountain feudist. He never forgets the breaker of a promise, whether it be man or nation. He has the capacity of a volcano both to smolder and to erupt. He is now talking privately and bitterly about "international bandits" who are menacing the peace of the world. The vigilante spirit possesses him.

I am not sure that it will not eventually be necessary for the democracies of the world to unite against fascism. That is a question to be faced and answered. It cannot be properly answered by shamming a foreign policy of isolation behind a naval policy of "coastline defense," while actually pursuing the logic of an understanding with Great Britain behind a naval policy designed for application in distant waters. First of all the Administration should determine its foreign policy, then formulate a naval policy to make it effective, and, finally, take the country into its confidence about both. There is a present danger that the navy will formulate its own policy, which subsequently will determine our foreign policy, and that the country will remain confused about both until it is too late to do anything. To reduce the matter simply and dogmatically, it would appear that if we expect to fight in the Pacific, our navy should be twice as large as that contemplated by the expansion program; if we don't expect to fight in the Pacific, we already have more battleships than we need.

To those who would like an idea of what we are heading for, I commend for study the May bill, now apparently about to be reported by the House Military Affairs Committee. It contains complete plans for a Presidential dictatorship automatically to go into effect upon a declaration of war. Space prevents giving the details, but Representative Maury Maverick described it accurately as "a complete fascist blueprint."

New Ferment in India

BY JOHN GUNTHER

Bombay, January 10

IT REALLY is a continent. I feel like a mouse nibbling at an elephant. I have seen people from the Aga Khan to Mr. Gandhi and Mr. Nehru, from Parsee millionaires to young Congress Socialists and Communists. Their different stories both interlock and conflict. One may explore any number of drifts, tensions, situations. There are, one might say, at least four different major confrontations of power. British versus Indian. Native princes versus British India. Congress versus government. Hindu versus Moslem. They all intermingle, with perplexing contradictions and cross drifts.

The Working Committee of the Indian National Congress has just met. It meets often and will meet again before the annual plenary session of the congress at Haripura next month. The meeting just concluded was not so important for its agenda or decisions as for another drift in Indian affairs it shows. It would be absurd to state that the congress has suffered a real cleavage, or is formally truncated between left and right. There is no split yet. But we are seeing, after many years of development, the jelling of two distinct congress groups.

First to define terms. The Indian National Congress is more than a party; it thinks of itself as the organized expression of the aims and the will of the Indian people. It includes Moslems as well as Hindus, though in small proportion; vastly rich industrialists as well as the laborers they hire; agitators in the princely states as well as prime ministers in the seven new congress governments. Anyone may join the congress who pays the annual subscription of four annas (about nine cents) a year—even this minuscule sum is too much for many Indian peasants—and who signs the congress pledge to work for the independence of India by legitimate and peaceful means. The congress has perhaps three million members; it has been since 1919 (its origins go much farther back but that is another story) both the reservoir and the attacking stream of Indian man-power against Britain. It is a sort of people's front—though for years the Communists stood outside it—against imperialism.

The congress structure is complex. First come "primary members" in the towns and villages, who choose delegates to the provincial congress committees. A constituency is 250 primary members. The provincial committees choose the All-India Congress Committee, a sort of parliament. The president of the congress, elected annually—for two years the president has been Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru—is responsible to it. The president selects fourteen men to be, roughly speaking, his Cabinet, though force of tradition requires him to choose

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men of varying sorts on an all-congress basis rather than those who reflect his personal views. The president and his fourteen associates, the top of the congress structure, are called the Working Committee.

Having done my best to understand this (I am skipping many details now), I was puzzled during my first days in Bombay to hear incessant references by congressmen to the "high command." I assumed at first that the high command was the Working Committee. But it is not. The high command is Mr. Gandhi. But Mr. Gandhi, for purposes of his own, is not a member of the Working Committee; he is not even a member of the congress. Yet he dominates the congress absolutely. When I arrived in India I thought, like many visitors innocent of its complexities, that Mr. Gandhi was a back number. I thought he had been superseded by the younger men. Nothing could have been more wrong. Mr. Gandhi is sixty-eight and not in the best of health; his doctors permit him only a limited amount of political discussion; he lives inaccessibly in a remote village in the Central Provinces; but he is still very nearly the heart, soul, brain, and fingers of the congress. Practically nothing can be done by the congress without his advice and consent. They call it "Gandhi-raj."

Why? Because to the people of India Mr. Gandhi is Jesus Christ. Rather, he is a sort of unbelievable combination of Jesus Christ and Tammany Hall; a revered leader, a leader who is literally worshiped, who adds an exquisite sense of the temporal to his spiritual qualities, who is a sublime political tactician as well as savior.

The Working Committee of the congress is a fascinating study in human and political nature. Devoted, disinterested, the members remind one of the old Politburo in the U. S. S. R. They represent different spheres of action, but they are united by congress ideals. The membership is fantastically variegated; when I saw most of the members in Juhu, waiting in Mr. Gandhi's anteroom for a word with the master, I thought I had never met such different types of men bound by common faith. Mr. Bhulabhai Desai, the wealthy and cultivated leader of the bar in Bombay; a tough party boss like Vallabhbhai Patel, who except for his congress uniform of white homespun might have stepped out of the Fifth Ward in Chicago; the Moslem theologian Abdul Kalam Azad, who was born in Mecca; the poetess Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, one of the few Indian politicians I met who likes to laugh; Khan Abdul Ghaffer Khan, the tall soldier from the Northwest Frontier; a peasant from Bihar with shaggy beard—these are leading members of this oddly assorted but homogeneous committee.

The president, Jawaharlal Nehru, is perhaps the finest man in public life I have ever met. As everyone knows, he is a Kashmiri Brahman (in American, say a Boston Lodge or Cabot), the son of the greatest lawyer in India, who went to Harrow and Cambridge and became while still in his twenties the leader of the congress youth. He has been in jail seven times. He has given everything he has to the *Swaraj* (independence) cause. Sensitive, fastidious, a bit ingrown, an intellectual, he is yet a man of action and a great popular leader.

Now it is said frequently that Mr. Gandhi and Mr. Nehru represent opposite poles in congress politics. This is far from being correct. The two are deeply devoted to each other. Nehru needs the "high command" because Gandhi alone carries the mass of the Indian people. Gandhi needs Nehru, not only for his faith and his abilities but because his influence is so powerful, especially with the youth.

Gandhi, people say, represents the "right," Nehru the "left." Again this is not quite correct. There are potent forces in the congress to the "right" of Gandhi, especially some millionaire mill-owners; similarly Nehru is outflanked by leftists much farther left than he. Commonly called a socialist, Nehru is not a member of the All-India Congress Socialist Party, which is a sort of autonomous left-wing body within the congress. Gandhi is, one might say, "right center," Nehru "left center."

The left began to emerge as a distinct political force within the congress when civil disobedience was called off in 1934. The revolt against Britain then fizzled out; the congress had to become legal again. It turned "respectable," and many prominent politicians of the right became members. At the same time, largely under Nehru's influence, a vast irrigation of socialist thought watered India. Hitherto the congress had been, in the large, dominated by only one tenet—nationalism. Thereafter a great many congressmen became socialists as well as nationalists; the Socialist Party, within the congress, was formed. This was a natural enough evolution, because imperialism is what the congress hated, and British imperialism is capitalistic. But it gave the British opportunity to attack the congress on class as well as national lines. I have not yet met an Englishman in India who talked of Gandhi without respect. But almost all the English dislike Nehru and fear him on class grounds.

So much for background. In 1937 a tremendous event occurred. It is the cause of all the fermentation now. It is the core of the story, and out of it no one quite knows what will grow. The tremendous event was that, after the passage of the new Government of India Act, elections were held in the eleven provinces of British India, and that Congress won in seven of them and took office. Thus "provincial autonomy," as promised in the new act, came into being. Thus the congress, the congress which had fought Britain, came into the British structure!

Mr. Nehru and his wing of the congress violently opposed taking office. His followers thought that autonomy, as defined in the act, did not go far enough; they thought that acceptance of office, working under British governors, was a fatal compromise. But after almost four months of delay and haggling Mr. Gandhi evolved a formula which seemed to permit the congress to take office without loss of face. A kind of gentleman's agreement appeared to bind—perhaps not quite bind—the Viceroy and the governors not to use their veto powers except in circumstances of great public crisis. The right wingers in the congress were satisfied. Seven congress prime ministers, with seven congress cabinets, began the task of governing their part of India.

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Perhaps a further word of explanation is necessary. British policy since the war has been, in a sentence, to give India something, but not too much, with dominion status as the distant end in view. Congress policy has been to get what it could, with complete independence—though for years Congress did not go so far—in view. Almost twenty years of negotiation and painful strife produced the compromise constitution of the new Government of India Act. The congress at first opposed the act. Later it accepted part of it. Provincial autonomy, the first part of the act to go into effect, did beyond doubt greatly increase the powers of the provinces. One can see how the congress was tempted. It ended dyarchy; it abolished the "reserved" subjects which the old provincial assemblies were not allowed to touch; it did indeed keep foreign affairs and defense in the hands of Delhi, but the provinces were given full powers over such items as local finance, police, prisons, education, health, public works, agriculture and forests, land revenue, above all law and order. Moreover, whereas ministers under the old system were little but mouthpieces of the British governor, the new ministers, elected by the Indian people, have complete administrative charge of their own departments.

Congress governments were finally formed in Bombay, Madras, the United Provinces, the Central Provinces, Bihar, and Orissa in July, 1937, and in the Northwest Frontier a little later. Now a curious point. The "high command" and the Working Committee under Mr. Nehru decided not to take office themselves in any province. Logically one might have assumed that the Working Committee leaders, if they stood for election and were returned, would be the new prime ministers. But they decided not to enter office themselves. Instead, they deputed a second line of leaders to take on the new administrative posts. The Working Committee, rather like the Politburo in the Soviet Union, decided to keep out of actual administrative work, and to guide the seven governments from behind the scenes. So second-line congressmen (I know that one or two of them may dislike this appellation, but I do not mean it personally) became the prime ministers and finance ministers and all the rest, and the Working Committee was transformed into a sort of composite *Eminence Grise*.

This may prove to be a misfortune. For already, in the seven months of provincial autonomy, fairly grave dissidences have arisen between the Working Committee and the congress governments. The Working Committee holds the whip hand, of course. It can break any provincial government. Their men are its men. But it cannot afford to attack its own ministers openly. Thus, when there is divergence of opinion, negotiations have to be very delicate.

Two dangers, from the left point of view, face the new governments. First, as in the case of the Wafd in Egypt, they may find that the sweets of power are sweet. They may be tempted by the comforts and advantages of their position to modify the pure fervor of their congress nationalism. Second, they may find that running a government is a great deal more difficult than criticizing it; this too may seduce them into "moderation," which word congress radicals are apt to interpret as subservience to Britain.

Provincial autonomy was an enormously shrewd gesture by the British, though many Englishmen think—and fear—that it gave the congress "too much." But in essence it was a masterly business, because it brought the congress for the first time within the fold of government, with governmental responsibilities; it gave the congress most of the prickly things to handle while holding on to veto power, defense, foreign affairs, and federal finance for the British.

What has happened? What have the provincial governments done in their baptism of office? First, let it be noted that almost all the congress ministers are right wingers. This follows the complexion of the Working Committee, which numbers roughly eleven right wingers to four left wingers. So the ministers began their legislative programs cautiously. In several provinces they declined to have social relations with the governors, though official relations might be quite correct; in Bombay the prime minister introduced a bill banning the British titles and honorifics which flood India every New Year's Day. But they did not attack the fundamentals of British power anywhere; they moved gingerly to avoid conflict with the governors; their program of social reform—housing, education, reduction of agricultural debt, and so on—got under way very slowly. They cut their own salaries to 500 rupees a month—while their British secretaries might be getting five times that sum—and promised as a first effort at economy to slash salaries in the provincial civil service.

Second, in five of the seven provinces at least they began to introduce prohibition legislation. It is difficult for an American who saw our prohibition débâcle to sympathize with this. But prohibition is a foremost point in the congress program. It can be introduced only at great cost. Revenue from "toddy" and other alcoholic drink amounts, by and large, to almost one-quarter of the provincial revenue. Moreover, the cost of enforcement will be very considerable. Altogether prohibition will mean that Bombay, for instance, may lose one-third of its total revenue, which must be met by other means. The congress ministers, if they take toddy from the peasant, must cut salaries of school teachers from, say, thirty-five rupees a month to twenty-five.

Third, most of the congress governments, especially Bombay, the United Provinces, Bihar, and Madras, have been unendingly perplexed by the problem of extremism. The situation is peculiar. Here is the congress in office at last, after many years of electoral propaganda and electoral promises. But the congress, no matter how well disposed, cannot begin to fulfil these promises at once. In the United Provinces, for instance, the congress has held out the bright beacon of land reform. The restive peasantry in the United Provinces is demanding action, like liquidation of the agricultural debt, which the congress cannot now perform. Any drastic solution of the land problem like collectivization would instantly lead to con-

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flict with the governor. In Bihar the *kisans* (peasants), awaiting the promised reforms, refused to pay rent to the landlords, who thereupon refused to pay taxes to the government. Refusal of tax payment to a British government was one thing. The congress sympathized with it and indeed advocated it for years. But refusal of tax payments to a congress government is quite another thing, because it means that the congress loses revenue.

Again, the congress governments, particularly that in Bombay, are worried about political agitation by extremists. Take the case of the new congress minister for law and order, Mr. Munshi. For years Mr. Munshi has been part of a movement which taught the people to hate and despise the police; Mr. Munshi himself, like almost all congress leaders, went to jail for civil disobedience. But now Mr. Munshi is in charge of the police, and sometimes he finds that he has to use them even against his own people. It is an unenviable situation to say the least. He is asked to repeal the repressive acts still on the statute books, but it is difficult for him to do so.

Two congress ministries at least—Madras and the United Provinces—have had actually to arrest congressmen under an act of the Indian penal code which governs sedition and its punishment and which all good congressmen, for twenty years, have learned to hate like arsenic. Yet in one case all that the offender did was make a speech against recruiting. He got six months. The case has been appealed. The leftists say that it is intolerable for the congress to prosecute a man for sedition when the congress by its basic nature is itself seditionist, that is, advocates complete severance of the tie with Britain. Another highly unpopular act which gives a magistrate summary right to quell disturbances has had to be invoked by congress ministers in connection with strikes at Sholapur and Cawnpore.

All this came to a head in the meeting of the Working Committee just concluded in Bombay. Leftists, especially Socialists, were resentful at the harsh treatment of the leaders of the Bihar peasantry, who had been threatened with expulsion from the congress. Argument was vivid. The rightists came out on top. The Working Committee's resolution expressed confidence in the various provincial governments, deplored extremism and violence—the congress is, after all, based on the principle of non-violence—compromised on the Bihar issue, and asked for patience by the people.

It would be easy to make out far too harsh a case against the congress governments. No one can blame them for holding on to office when retirement from office would mean that reactionaries would get the jobs. Administrative experience, which the governments are getting a-plenty, is something the congress has badly needed; these transition years may be a precious interlude for Congress to learn how to govern. Again, one should not criticize too warmly the incipient legislative programs. Seven months is not very long. The experience is just beginning. The governments have the promise of five years of office. And the congress still has independence as its final aim.

The next big issue is, everyone agrees, federation. The federal provisions of the Government of India Act are not yet in force. Federation means unity of the provinces with the native states under a new central legislature. Congress opposes the gigantic problem of federation vigorously. It is a moot point whether, as many think, opposition to federation will dwindle as did opposition to provincial autonomy. Mr. Gandhi has not, I believe, committed himself formally on federation. I imagine he will have the final word. Meantime the left is a bit unhappy; the right is standing pat.

Those "Regulated" British Unions

BY LEO HUBERMAN

EVER since the Supreme Court upheld the Wagner Act editorial writers and big-time columnists have been echoing the demands of the employers that trade unions be saddled with a load of responsibilities to balance their newly won privileges. The argument runs something like this: The Wagner Act is obviously one-sided. It is unfair to the employers and should be amended. Trade unions, for their own good, should be made responsible bodies, as they are in England. The English model is the one to follow. In England trade unions must be incorporated; in England long-drawn-out disputes, so costly to employers, employees, and the general public, are settled by compulsory arbitration; in England etc., etc.

This has been told us so long and so often that we have begun to believe it. It is an impressive argument. But it has one serious defect—it is simply not true. Let us take the advice of our employers; let us look at England. We will consider here only those rights and privileges which the trade unions have according to law. Whether or not the present trade-union leadership is militant and wide-awake, taking full advantage of its opportunities, is another story.

What are the facts? In England trade unions are *not* incorporated. There are no if's or but's to that flat statement. It stands just as it is. In England trade unions *may* be registered with the Registrar of Friendly Societies, a government official. But registration is not compulsory. The latest available official figures are those for 1935. At the end of that year, of some 1,042 trade unions known to be in existence, only 441 were registered. It is true that these 441 unions comprised about 80 per cent of the

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total trade-union membership, but it is also true that several of the largest unions were not registered. And the point to remember is that the unions which registered did so not because they had to but because they wanted to.

Why should they want to? The report of the Chief Registrar of Friendly Societies gives us a clue. "The registration of trade unions was first permitted by the Trade Union Act of 1871, which is still the principal act. The main purpose of the act was to relieve trade unions and their members from some of the disabilities which they suffered owing to their objects being in restraint of trade." Ever since the time of Henry V, in the fifteenth century, it has been a principle of English common law that practices in restraint of trade are illegal. This meant that trade unions, even after they were granted the legal right to existence by the repeal of the Combinations Acts in 1824, found it difficult to carry on, since their practices were in restraint of trade. After a series of bitter struggles workers forced a change in the law; the Trade Union Act of 1871 established that though their acts were in restraint of trade, trade unions were no longer illegal bodies.

The unions which register do so only because such registration confers several tangible advantages. For example, registered trade unions are absolved from paying income tax on their provident funds—moneys devoted to benefits to their members for sickness, death, accident, unemployment, etc.; registered unions can hold land and property in their own name; if an official of a registered union embezzles its funds, the fact of its registration has established its legal *bona fides* as a trade union and the procedure in law is swift and simple. Since the fact that it is a trade union entitled to act in restraint of trade has already been established, it only remains for the court to decide whether or not the accused official is guilty. An unregistered union, in bringing action against an embezzling official, is faced with the necessity of first proving that it is a legal body, that it has the right to hold funds.

Nevertheless, many unions feel that the obligations inherent in registration exceed the advantages. They feel, for example, that to disclose their accounts, to make public full information concerning their membership rolls and financial strength, is to give to employers too powerful a weapon. Accordingly, they prefer to remain unregistered. Since 1913 it has become possible for unregistered unions to obtain from the Registrar a certificate establishing their legal *bona fides* as trade unions, but neither certification nor actual registration can properly be compared to incorporation. In England trade unions are not incorporated.

In England there is no compulsory arbitration. The Minister of Labor may inquire into the cause of any trade dispute, he may attempt to bring about a settlement, he may, with the consent of both parties to the dispute, refer the matter for settlement to an Industrial Court or to a board of arbitration satisfactory to both parties; but the resort to conciliation or arbitration is entirely voluntary, and the decision is not legally binding upon either of the parties to the dispute. *Even when there has been an agreement beforehand to accept the decision of the arbitrator, the award is not legally enforceable.*

Similarly, there is nothing in English law to prevent a trade union from signing an agreement one day and breaking it the next. As a general rule, of course, trade unions in England, as in the United States, do not break agreements without good and sufficient cause. But there is no legal compulsion to keep an agreement.

In England it is impossible to sue a trade union, either civilly or criminally, for conspiracy or for any alleged wrong committed by or for the union. This means that a Coronado Coal case could not occur in England. It means, therefore, that trade-union activities cannot be stopped by smart lawful raids upon their funds. In England the union is not responsible for anything done in a trade dispute even if the trespassers are acting on orders from union officials. Suppose a strike is on and the leaders of the union encourage, even order, their men to break windows, smash machinery, beat up scabs. They do so and are arrested. The men who committed the acts of violence are themselves responsible. If the union leaders should be arrested and tried as party to the crime, they would be held as individuals, not as officials of the union. The union, as such, could not be held liable for damages; it could not be sued.

In England unions are free to organize strikes. This is not a privilege granted by law but an inalienable right accepted as a matter of course. It is true that the Trades Disputes Act of 1927 makes sympathetic strikes illegal for all practical purposes, and also curtails other important liberties which the trade unions had won after bitter struggle. This act, introduced after the decisive defeat of the British working class in the general strike, is perhaps the most reactionary piece of legislation instituted in England in the twentieth century. It is all the more striking, therefore, to find that neither incorporation nor compulsory arbitration is part of the act.

If it be asked why strikes are fewer and less bloody in England than in the United States, the answer is plain. There is, in England, little nonsense about the right of workers to organize. Employers do not hire detective agencies to report on the union activities of their workers. It is assumed that trade unions are here to stay. They must be dealt with. Employers in England, unlike those in America, offer little challenge to the workers' right to join unions, have ceased to prattle nineteenth-century arguments against recognition of unions or collective bargaining. Memorial Day massacres are rare in England because Tom Girdlers are rare. And Tom Girdlers are rare because some time ago a militant trade-union movement made it quite clear that they could not get away with murder.

Incidentally, the C. I. O.–A. F. of L. battle was joined in England back in 1889, when the movement to organize the unorganized unskilled workers gained tremendous headway after a notable victory in the great dock strike. Though craft unionism is still strong, the unions of unskilled workers which began at that time are today among the most powerful in England.

In England negotiations are carried on by employers

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or employers' organizations on the one side and trade-union officials on the other. Employers do not dish up any hooey about not dealing with "outside agitators," that is, the national or district officials of the union. Collective agreements covering wages, hours, and conditions for the country as a whole are continually being made. And increasingly these agreements include provisions giving to the workers a voice in workshop planning and in other functions which the employers have long considered exclusively their own prerogative—the employer's "right to do what he likes in his own business" is being restricted.

In England the trade-union movement is also a political movement. The Labor Party, in fact, was created by and for the trade unions back in 1900. Members of unions who wish to do so make regular contributions to the political fund of their union. In 1935, according to the report of the Registrar, the number contributing was more than two million, well over 50 per cent of all union members. The total amount of their contributions in that year was £163,000. How, according to law, may this money be spent? The trade unions have the legal right to hold political meetings, to give financial assistance to their candidates standing for election to Parliament or to any public office, and to help financially to support these persons while they are in office. Under such an arrangement can there be any doubt about whom a Labor M. P. really represents? The class lines are sharply drawn, and the trade-union movement has its own political party to safeguard its interests.

American workers may well follow their employers' advice—take a good look at England.

God Gets an Idea

BY GEORGE S. KAUFMAN

THE Lord got up one morning, brushed His teeth, and took a look at the world below.

"Things aren't very good," He said.

"No, Sir," said His secretary.

"It seems to Me," said the Lord, "that a lot of it's My fault. Maybe I haven't been trying hard enough. There must be a lot of people down there that don't even know I exist."

"But surely, Sir—"

"No, I mean it. I've been listening to the radio recently. And I'll bet you Lucky Strikes are much better known than I am."

"But, Sir—"

"But nothing. This is a new age, my boy, and we've got to use new methods. I'm going on the air. Get Me the biggest advertising man in the business."

So they got him—the biggest advertising man in the business. He heard the whole idea through, and shook his head uncertainly.

"You mean the whole talk would be religious?" he asked.

"Of course," said the Lord.

"It's pretty risky," said the advertising man. "We got in a lot of trouble with Mae West lately, on a thing something like that."

"But this would be serious," said the Lord. "In a world torn by strife and hatred, ruled by cruel and ruthless dictators—"

"Hold on," said the advertising man. "You can't say anything about the dictators, you know. Germany's sure to protest, and then we'll get in wrong with the government."

"But they're at the root of most of the world's trouble."

"Well, maybe. But we get our license from the government, don't forget. And we've got all kinds of clients, too. A lot of them don't like to hear that kind of stuff."

"Then suppose I just talk about peace? Just peace."

"That would be better. Of course it doesn't sound very exciting—it won't be easy to find a sponsor. But I'll see what I can do."

So he went after a sponsor. Jello thought it was a good idea, but finally decided that Jack Benny was a better bet. Packard turned it down cold. The Bayer people were impressed, but said that peace wouldn't sell aspirin. Now, if He would talk on another subject . . . Chase and Sanborn already had Edgar Bergen, but thought something pretty good could be worked out between God and Charlie McCarthy. And so it went. Most of them said they were sorry they couldn't use Him right then, but they would bear Him in mind, and if anything came up . . .

The best he could offer, said the advertising man, would be a sustaining program. That meant He not only wouldn't get paid for it, but would have to pay for the band Himself.

"What band?" asked the Lord.

"Why, the band that would go on with you," said the advertising man. "You didn't expect just to talk, did You?"

"Yes, I did, kind of," said the Lord. "You see, I've got a good deal to say."

"They won't listen for more than five or six minutes," said the advertising man. "They're not used to it. Now, the way I see it is this: we open with a bit of your theme music, something like 'Have You Met Miss Jones?' Then comes a snappy announcement—'JQX takes pleasure in introducing an old Favorite'—something like that. Then You do six minutes, maybe six and a quarter. And after that the band again, with something hot."

"Maybe," said the Lord, "we had better let the whole matter drop."

"No," said the advertising man, "it sounds to me like a good idea. All You've got to do is catch on a little bit and we'll get a sponsor and make a lot of money. Now, when would You like to go on?"

"The sooner the better," said the Lord, "considering how things are. What about this Sunday night?"

"This Sunday?" said the advertising man. "Good heavens, no! Roosevelt is on!"

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Issues and Men

BY OSWALD GARRISON VILLARD

A WEEK'S stay in Washington has finally convinced me that there is a determined drive on the part of certain persons, some connected with the government, to put us into war with Japan. They are careful to say that that is the very reverse of their purpose, but their words and their acts are precisely such as one would expect if they were part of a deliberate plan to embroil us in the war now going on in Asia. Why else should the State Department be making so much of the fact that one of our diplomats had his face slapped; however humane and chivalrous his motives, he was mixing into something—if the dispatches I have read were correct—that was not his business, which he would have kept out of if he had really understood the duty of a neutral diplomat. Then there was an attempt to play up the rough handling of an American newspaperman, but that fell quite flat. Next came the identical notes of the United States, Britain, and France demanding information about what Japan is really up to in the matter of battleships. I may be wrong, but I would be willing to bet quite a little sum that if Japan should come across with the desired information Mr. Hull's warriors would be the most disappointed men in Washington. I believe that from now on this policy will continue; the government will play up every incident it can to arouse public opinion. Washington newspapermen were freely saying that they expected to see strong action against the Japanese fishermen who are fishing off the Alaskan coast. Their presence provides a wonderful opportunity to rush some cutters and destroyers up there to prove to Japan once more that we are good red-blooded Americans who cannot be trifled with.

When I said this to an official the other day, he replied: "Well, why not? Have we got to take lying down everything those Japs do to us? With the Japanese army and navy out of hand and refusing to obey the orders of their own government, it's up to us to let those militarists know in the only language they can understand just what is likely to come to them." That is exactly the point of view of the belligerent persons I have in mind. When one says to them, "Then you are going to let these militarists lead you into the horror and cost of a war?" they reply that we owe something to our national honor and that it is time we let the dictators everywhere know that we "can still fight if we have to."

Well, if this policy is not changed by an immediate outpouring of public sentiment in opposition, it is only a question of time when we shall come to grips with Japan. Personally I think that a continuation of this policy is certain to infuriate the very Japanese militarists we are seeking to overawe. Those who favor our going to war and are trying to engineer it are setting three months as the necessary time to have enough Japanese "incidents" and work the country up into such a fury that it will be ready to let loose our dogs of war. They "fear" that our ships and sailors will be the victims of other Panay happenings, but when you suggest to them that this is the time to prevent such events by taking our ships out of China they look at you with scorn and repeat Mr. Hull's words that we have rights, responsibilities, and duties in China.

Fortunately this campaign is already running into difficulties; the process of waking up America and making it war-minded is not going as well as had been expected. Many people are speaking out, and acting too. Boake Carter continues his magnificent work on the radio and in his column. Professor E. M. Borchard has just shown up what is on foot in a splendid address under the auspices of the Bronson Cutting Foundation in Washington. Father Coughlin has come to life with a proper broadcast that it is much more important that we take care of the alarming increase in unemployment and suffering here at home than that we undertake the disciplining of berserker Japanese militarists.

The Congress has opened well. That indefensible $800,000,000 armament program is not slipping through so easily and unanimously as the White House hoped. Admiral Leahy has already been nine days on the witness stand, and he appeared to be an extremely unhappy and worried witness when I heard him last week. The revelation that Captain Ingersoll of the navy had been in London masquerading as "Captain Smith" and Leahy's refusal to tell what he was doing there so alarmed Secretary Hull that he answered Senator Johnson's proposed resolution, which the Senate had tabled, before the Senate thought of passing it. Mr. Hull may well say that there are no formal alliances between the United States and England, but he will hardly deny that there have been those long and detailed informal conversations which play so deadly a part at times in international relations. I believe that a perfect understanding exists concerning the role the British navy will play if we go to war with Japan. At any rate Washington is full of stories about the six battleships which the British are to send to Singapore to cut off all Japanese ships at the Straits while we cut the trade routes at Panama and Cape Horn. One of our squadrons, the story runs, is based near the Dutch islands to protect them from sudden raids.

The saddest thing of all is that Secretary Hull cannot see that the day we go into the war all the fine things he had done for peace through his bilateral trade agreements will crash.

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BOOKS *and the* ARTS

DOS PASSOS AND THE U. S. A.

BY T. K. WHIPPLE

THE choice of the ambitious title "U. S. A."* for the volume which brings together Dos Passos's "The 42nd Parallel," "Nineteen-Nineteen," and "The Big Money" looks as if it might be intended to stake out a claim on the fabulous "great American novel." And Dos Passos's claim is not a weak one. A single book could hardly be more inclusive than his: in the stories of his main characters he covers most parts of the country during the first three decades of the twentieth century. His people have considerable social diversity, ranging from Mac, the I. W. W. typesetter, and Joe Williams, the feckless sailor, to Ben Compton, the radical leader, Eleanor Stoddard, the successful decorator, Margo Dowling, the movie star, and J. Ward Moorehouse, the big publicity man. The background of the panorama is filled out with "newsreels" of newspaper headlines, popular songs, and the like, with the autobiographic "camera eye" which gives snatches of Dos Passos's own experience, and with a series of biographical portraits of representative men—Debs, Edison, Wilson, Joe Hill, Ford, Veblen, Hearst, and twenty more. Probably no other American novel affords a picture so varied and so comprehensive.

Furthermore, the picture is rendered with extraordinary vividness and brilliance of detail, especially of sensory detail. Sights and sounds and above all smells abound until the reader is forced to wonder that so many people, of such different sorts, are all so constantly aware of what their eyes and ears and noses report to to them: might not some of them, one asks, more often get absorbed in meditation or memory or planning or reverie? But it is no part of Dos Passos's scheme to spend much time inside his characters' heads; he tells, for the most part, what an outsider would have seen or heard—gestures, actions, talk, as well as the surroundings. The result is a tribute to the keenness of the author's observation—not only of colors, noises, and odors but, even more important, of human behavior and of American speech. People as well as things are sharp and distinct.

Nor does the presentation lack point and significance. As the book goes on, the U. S. A. develops, with the precision of a vast and masterly photograph, into a picture of a business world in its final ripeness, ready to fall into decay. Though Dos Passos does not call himself a Marxist—and would seem in fact not to be one—his point of view is unmistakably radical. The class struggle is present as a minor theme; the major theme is the vitiation and degradation of character in such a civilization. Those who prostitute themselves and succeed are most completely corrupted; the less hard and less self-centered are baffled and beaten; those who might have made good workers are wasted; the radicals experience internal as well as external defeat. No one attains any real satisfaction. Disintegration and frustration are everywhere. The whole presentation leads to the summary: "Life is a shambles." Perhaps there are implications that it need not be; but no doubt is left that actually it is.

These generalities, when stated as generalities, have of course become the trite commonplaces of a whole school of literature. But actual people shown going through the process of victimization can never become trite or commonplace; the spectacle must always be pitiful and terrible. And no one, I should suppose, could look on Dos Passos's picture wholly untouched and unmoved. But still one might ask whether he has quite achieved the tragic effect which presumably he aimed at.

To complain that the picture is one-sided may appear captious and unreasonable, and in one sense of "one-sided" it is. The whole truth about a hundred million people throughout thirty years cannot be told in fifteen hundred—or in fifteen million—pages. The novelist has to select what he considers representative and characteristic persons and events, and if Dos Passos has chosen to omit big business men, farmers, and factory workers, and to dwell chiefly on midway people in somewhat ambiguous positions—intellectuals, decorators, advertising men—perhaps that is his privilege. The question is whether this picture of his, which is surely extensive enough as novels go, is entirely satisfactory within the limitations which must be granted. How close does "U. S. A." come to being a great American novel? That it comes within hailing distance is proved by the fact that it has already been so hailed; indeed, it comes close enough so that the burden of proof is on those who would deny the title. Yet to grant it offhand would be premature.

On one point at least everyone probably agrees: that the biographical portraits are magnificent, and are the best part of the book. But wherein are they superior? Is it not that these portraits have a greater depth and solidity than Dos Passos's fictional characterizations—a more complete humanity? If so, the implication must be that his creation of character is not complete. And indeed when Mac is put beside Big Bill Haywood, or Ben Compton beside Joe Hill and Jack Reed, or Margo Dowling beside Isadora Duncan, the contrast is unflattering to Dos Passos's powers as a novelist. There is more human

*"U. S. A.: The 42nd Parallel; Nineteen-Nineteen; The Big Money." By John Dos Passos. Harcourt, Brace and Company. $3.

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reality in the 10 pages given to Henry Ford than in the 220 given to Charley Anderson. Nor is the explanation that the real people are exceptional, the fictitious ones ordinary, satisfactory: some of the fictitious ones are supposed to be leaders; and besides it is a novelist's business so to choose and treat his imagined characters as to reveal his themes in their utmost extension, not at their flattest. No; the contrast has nothing to do with the positions people occupy; it is a fundamental matter of the conception of human nature and the portrayal of it in literature.

In thinking of this contrast, one notices first that the real men have a far better time of it in the world, that they do find a good many genuine satisfactions, that even when they fail—when they are jailed like Debs or shot down like Joe Hill—they are not wholly defeated. Inside them is some motive power which keeps them going to the end. Some of them swim with the stream and some against it, but they all swim; they all put up a fight. They all have persistent ruling passions. Furthermore, they are all complex and many-sided, full of contradictions and tensions and conflicts. They have minds, consciousness, individuality, and personality.

Not that all these things are entirely lacking in the fictitious characters—Dos Passos is too good a novelist for that—but they do appear only in a much lower degree, played down, degraded, reduced to a minimum. As a result, the consciousness of these people is of a relatively low order. True, they are aware with an abnormal keenness of their sensations, but is not this sensory awareness the most elementary form of consciousness? On the other hand, these folk can hardly be said to think at all, and their feelings are rather sharp transitory reactions than long-continuing dominant emotions. Above all, they are devoid of will or purpose, helplessly impelled hither and yon by the circumstances of the moment. They have no strength of resistance. They are weak at the very core of personality, the power to choose. Now it may be that freedom of choice is an illusion, but if so it is an inescapable one, and even the most deterministic and behavioristic novelist cannot omit it or minimize it without denaturing human beings. When the mainspring of choice is weakened or left out, the conflicts and contradictions of character lose their virtue and significance, and personality almost disappears. Dos Passos often gives this effect: that in his people there is, so to speak, nobody much at home, or that he is holding out on us and that more must be happening than he is willing to let on. This deficiency shows itself most plainly in the personal relations of his characters—they are hardly persons enough to sustain real relations with one another, any more than billiard balls do—and in his treatment of crises, which he is apt to dispose of in some such way as: "They had a row so that night he took the train . . ."

The final effect is one of banality—that human beings and human life are banal. Perhaps this is the effect Dos Passos aimed at, but that it is needless and even false is proved by the biographical portraits, in which neither the men nor their lives are ever banal. The same objection holds, therefore, to Dos Passos's whole social picture as to his treatment of individuals, that he has minimized something vital and something which ought to be made much of—namely, forces in conflict. Society is hardly just rotting away and drifting apart; the destructive forces are tremendously powerful and well organized, and so are the creative ones. Furthermore, they are inextricably intermingled in institutions and in individuals. If Dos Passos is forced, by sheer fact, to present them so when he writes of Ford and Steinmetz and Morgan, why should he make little of them in his fiction? Is it to illustrate a preconceived and misleading notion that life nowadays is a silly and futile "shambles"?

One might hope, but in vain, to find the answer in the autobiographic "camera eye." To be sure, the author there appears as the extremest type of Dos Passos character, amazingly sensitive to impressions, and so amazingly devoid of anything else that most of the "camera eye" is uninteresting in the extreme. The effect of this self-portrait is further heightened by the brief prologue which introduces "U. S. A.": an account of a young man, plainly the author himself, who "walks by himself searching through the crowd with greedy eyes, greedy ears taut to hear, by himself, alone," longing to share everybody's life, finding his only link with other people in listening to their talk. If the obvious conclusion could be accepted that Dos Passos had been never a participant but always a mere onlooker hungry for participation, so that he had to depend only on observation from outside, it would explain much. But such is not the fact; he took part in the World War and in the Sacco-Vanzetti case and other activities. He has been no mere spectator of the world. Moreover, he must have had powerful and lasting purposes and emotions to have written his books, and it is hardly credible that he has done so little thinking as he makes out. His self-portrait must be heinously incomplete, if only because he is a real man. But it is possible that he may have chosen to suppress some things in himself and in his writing, and that he may have acquired a distrust of thought and feeling and will which has forced him back upon sensations as the only reliable part of experience. Some such process seems to have taken place in many writers contemporary with him, resulting in a kind of spiritual drought, and in a fear lest they betray themselves or be betrayed by life. Perhaps the disillusionment of the war had something to do with it, but more probably a partial view and experience of our present society are responsible.

According to any view, that society, in all conscience, is grim enough, but not banal, not undramatic. Dos Passos has reduced what ought to be a tale of full-bodied conflicts to an epic of disintegration and frustration. That reduction—*any* reduction—is open to objection, because it is an imperfect account of human beings and human society that does not present forces working in opposition. In that sense "U. S. A." is one-sided, whereas life and good literature are two-sided or many-sided. In a word, what we want is a dialectic treatment of people and the world. Dos Passos does not call himself a Marxist; if he were more of one, he might have written a better novel. The biographical portraits are the best part

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of his book because they are the most nearly Marxist, showing the dynamic contradictions of our time in the only way they can be shown—namely, as they occur in the minds and lives of whole men. Nothing will do, in the end, but the whole man.

Poem

H. B. MALLALIEU

And if the nightingale can still be amorous
It has been banished to the plains of Thrace.
Now love bids you voyage southward without fuss,
Where boiling-point is chastened by the ice.

This mimic screen has no use for birds,
No ear for song except the beating drum.
If you would more than whisper words
Then flee from giant ears. Southward come.

Think of snowfields where no rack of storm
Twists painfully the lives of men. The white snow
Lying miles long in unimpassioned calm,
Invites you, wrapped in furs, from Europe's vertigo.

And though you hide your eyes, indignant hate,
Burning your glance, freezes my cowardice.
We will wait here for winter and the night
When hail and cold will sting the uncovered face.

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BY BEN BELITT

Clapping the door to, in the little light,
In the stairfall's deepening plunge,
I see, in the slate dark, the lumped form, like a sponge,
Striking a rote erasure in the night—

I keep that figure—while a watery arc
Trembles and wanes in wetted tile, as if
It wrote all darkness down in hieroglyph,
And spoke vendetta with a water-mark.

That shadowy sleight shall presently define
A scuffed and hazardous wrist, a ruined jaw
Packed into goiter, like a pigeon's craw.
A bitten elbow webbed with a naphtha line;

While light shall lessen, blunting, by brute degrees,
The world's waste scanted to a personal sin,
Till all is darkness where her brush has been
And blinds the blackening marble by her knees.

. . .

I mark what way the dropping shaft-light went:
It flung the day's drowned faces out and fell
Hasped like a coffin, down a darkening well:

And poise on the shaftway for my own descent.

BOOKS

Faulkner's Dismal Swamp

THE UNVANQUISHED. By William Faulkner. Random House. $2.50.

THE twisted heritage which the Confederate South bestowed upon its descendants is something few of them have renounced. It has got into their blood, and all that their weakened minds can do is resort to a rather vague, rueful, and inadequate irony. The truer irony is that they are its victims, forever driven on to commemorate their loss of Eden till one greater man (and where will he come from?) restore them and regain the blissful seat. The South languishes in race infantilism. The South is a fetishist because of something that disrupted its childhood; it goes on fondling a faded gray uniform with epaulets, a sword put up in its worn tired scabbard.

The South, to be sure, knows its moments of awareness and revulsion, as who would not, seeing impoverished brains and bodies in crazed retreat, seeing backward children lost in benighted folkways. But frequently these are moments of fascination also, for the process of decay can take on rich and gorgeous colors. We have evidence of this powerful revulsion and fascination in the works of Mr. Faulkner, who is a poet of disintegration, a necromancer of half-lights, but as yet no true visionary. Mr. Faulkner's saga of Jefferson, Mississippi, and its environs—spread out through half a dozen books—is, if not the only end, at least one end to a story that begins with drums and bugles, high-bred horses and gallant women. The decline and derationalization of the South can go no farther than Mr. Faulkner has taken them; it is now only possible for him to carry the story back to its source.

So here are tales of the Sartoris family during the War Between the States—a series of vivid exploits seen through the eyes of Bayard Sartoris as a boy, and set down by him long afterward. His father John, a reckless soldier and skirmisher, is away from home, where Bayard is living with his grandmother and the slaves. Always at his side is the Negro boy Ringo, presumably his half-brother. The status of Ringo in the family circle is one of the most interesting things in the book, as to my mind Ringo is by far the most interesting character. But for those who read "The Unvanquished" in the spirit that millions have read "Gone with the Wind," it will be the grandmother who holds the stage—that indomitable ramrod, fierce as only sheltered and ladylike women can be. Lies, theft, murder itself count less with her than the twirling of a fan when it comes to saving the South, and her courage is quite equal to her criminality. I suppose that a great many women like Rosa Millard lived and behaved as she did during those desperate years. I am not so cynical as to refuse them homage. But they will never remind me of anything but the theater.

What Faulkner thinks of such women, and of such exploits as they achieved, and of all the disorder and valor and Marquis of Queensberry bloodshed that went on, is never altogether clear. The point of the book seems to be made when Bayard returns from law school after his father has been shot by an enemy, and defies the Southern code with a gesture that surpasses it. He will not kill his father's murderer; but neither will he ignore the insult. He goes unarmed

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to Redmond's office and lets Redmond shoot at him. This substitution of moral for physical bravura leaves the whole series of incidents uncomfortably question-marked. Certainly the tone and proportions of "The Unvanquished" are heroic rather than satiric. Certainly the merits of "the Cause" and the fortitude with which the Cause was defended—though I don't doubt that Mr. Faulkner has separated them in his own mind—are never clearly separated in the story. The very title of the book bespeaks an irony purely literary; it has the same double meaning as a pun. The book, at any rate, is pretty high-romantic stuff, cinema stuff, though where "Gone with the Wind" is pure Hollywood, "The Unvanquished" is coated with the expressionism of the foreign studio.

As writing, this is much the simplest book that Faulkner has written in a long time. To be sure, one keeps stumbling over nonsense like "Then he flung the door violently inward against the doorstop with one of those gestures with or by which an almost painfully unflagging preceptory of youth ultimately aberrates," but for the most part "The Unvanquished" gains from having been partly published in the *Saturday Evening Post*. As thinking, however, it seems to me as wilful, cluttered, sunless as ever. Faulkner is a master of sensation, the more lurid the sensation the better, and can throw marvelously strange lights over any scene he selects. But if he is fitted by neither temperament nor training to be a rational novelist, then, if he is to survive, he must move on from the company of the spellbinders to that of the seers; he must acquire and articulate a profounder moral sense, a capacity to enlarge life after the manner—to name the greatest—of a Dostoevski or an Emily Brontë. I do not see where, in this book, he has done more than brightly varnish rotten timber. I do not see where this book does more than repopulate a scene that Faulkner would do better to forget about. We are told, quite sensibly, that novelists should deal with the material they know best. But not forever, surely; and not if that material is a swamp, slowly, voraciously sucking the novelist in.

LOUIS KRONENBERGER

The Façade that Hitler Built

THE HOUSE THAT HITLER BUILT. By Stephen H. Roberts. Harper and Brothers. $3.

STEPHEN H. ROBERTS, professor of modern history at the University of Sidney, author of many imposing works, went in the autumn of 1935 to Europe to spend sixteen months in Germany and neighboring countries. His main aim was "to sum up the new Germany without any prejudice," except that his general approach was that of a "democratic individualist." He had been in Germany twice before, at the end of the inflation period and immediately prior to Hindenburg's treason, as he calls, with dangerous objectivity, Hitler's accession to power. He states that the Nazi authorities "did everything possible to aid his investigation" although they knew he was a critic. "The only refusal I encountered in all Germany was in being denied access to their collection of banned literature." This statement would be of greater value and interest if the author had given a list of the requests he did not make, knowing beforehand that they would be refused—requests of the sort that could only have shortened his obviously pleasant trip through the Third Reich. But even so, we can guess. Of the twenty-four chapters and fifty-eight sub-chapters of his work not one deals explicitly with Hitler's terror, the concentration camps, the *Schulungslager* for old people, the prisons of the *Gestapo*. If not the whole German house, certain rooms were closed to the Australian professor, and all the cellars.

The author himself admits that the faults of omission in his work are everywhere obvious and apologizes for them. To stress the limits of an investigation made with Nazi help is in itself no reproach. But it is very necessary to emphasize them when a paper so important and so carefully pro-Hitler —that is, profoundly anti-German—as the London *Times* calls Professor Roberts's book "excellent, restrained, concise, accurate—the best general book as yet about Nazi Germany."

The author is genuinely brilliant in his description and analysis of how Hitlerism works in special fields. He is at his best in solving the puzzle of Hitler economics. The chapters on autarchy and foreign trade, especially that on the "multiple-geared" currency, may enlighten many political romantics. The author's excellent sketch of the total fiasco of Hitler's agricultural policy—blood and soil but nothing to eat, the junkers still in their privileged position—shows convincingly that Hitler built no house but a façade.

Professor Roberts's appraisal of the origin of Hitlerism and its way to power is weak. The author reports many facts, perhaps all he knows, truly, but his interpretations wander astray. Such a chapter heading as The Riddle Hitler, such phrases as "almost a miracle" (Hitler's victory) or the reference to the timely outbreak of the Reichstag fire as "fate or design" indicate that the author belongs to the numerous group of historians who do not dare to call a swindler a swindler when he swindles a whole people, or a criminal a criminal when his spoil is a great country. In this frame of objectivity the author does not even hesitate to say that "all the brutal sides of his movement pass Hitler by. The killings, the oppressions, the imprisonments do not belong to the world of his imagination. He is too remote for them." It passes the author by that Hitler incites the terror, and sometimes is its very cruel executioner, like any top gangster.

And what has the author to say about Hitler's gorilla-in-chief, Himmler? He found him "much kindlier and much more thoughtful for his guests than any other Nazi leader, a man of exquisite courtesy . . ." Foreign opinion is wrong about him. He is "a justification of the wildly empirical methods of Hitlerism." He seems to possess "the simplicity of true greatness." To be sure, the author does not approve of his methods, but he seems to think that true greatness and murder combine very well. When Professor Roberts stops reporting he falls for the convincing concept of successful power, and cruel terror, the essence of Hitlerism, dwindles into the background. Many German-born democratic individualists became Nazis this way before they knew it.

There are few descriptions of personal experiences in this book, though the author traveled 8,000 miles through Germany and spoke to everybody without restriction. Of course he could not meet the underground workers, but he found the German people as a whole in favor of Hitler's dry pogrom! "Everybody accepted the idea of race penalization as such." It did not occur to him that the Germans who talked to the foreigner did not dare tell him what they really thought. It did not occur to him that there could not be 470,000 Jews still alive in Germany if the German people had really sunk to the level of the Gott-Führer Hitler, who has not yet punished anyone for torturing a Jew, but has made many of the Jew-killers national heroes.

Excellent again is the historian's analysis of Germany's international situation, the country's just, and Hitler's stupid, claims, the army's strength, the strategic possibilities of the

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coming war; and very timely indeed is his discussion of the relationship between the Nazi Party and the army. "So far Hitler has built up a 'one-party state'; it seems as if that state is in process of becoming an 'army state.'" This observation still holds. In the crisis of the last weeks in Germany certain generals and the aristocratic wing of the officers' corps lost. The event is the logical beginning of the belated liquidation of German feudalism. The subject Hitler is forced to act against his own will in order to construct a thoroughly modernized army. But a state under the heel of the army remains his goal. He started in 1918 as a spy for the Reichswehr generals; now he is the super *agent provocateur* who gives the orders.

I have stressed the shortcomings of this book because I want to recommend it to every student of contemporary history, with the warning that it is to be read with critical consciousness, the more carefully the more brilliant it is. Not that the author would come to false conclusions. On the contrary he sees very clearly that the German nation "has been duped in the sense that it has been launched along a road that can only lead to disaster." He proves this point in a thousand ways. His main mistake is that he identifies the German people with the Nazis and such an attitude prepares the way for a condemnation of the successful terrorist and of his victim as well. This attitude has already become a part of the new general war propaganda and it will make the overthrow of the war lords of all nations more difficult, or again impossible as in 1918.

FRANZ HOELLERING

"Duty's Faithful Child"

LOUISA MAY ALCOTT. By Katharine Anthony. Alfred A. Knopf. $3.

I BELIEVE it was Rebecca West who said of course there are many more literary men than women: the women are busy creating all these literary men, and all their readers too. It would be difficult to find, as Miss Anthony understands, a more tragic variation on this theme than Louisa May Alcott. At ten she began the impossible task of squaring, so to speak, the Alcott domestic circle. Prodigy and hoyden, she managed this house which was so fine a refuge for "lost girls, abused wives, friendless children" except when their name was Alcott. With her unworldly and unpractical father and her worldly but unpractical mother, Louisa dreamed early of her future "fame." For fame meant money. "I long to honestly get a little." And throughout the balance of her harried existence Louisa, this strangely respectable product of Boston's famous bohemian family, transcendental Sangers whose unhappy offspring may in fact be termed a sort of constant literary nymph, continued to serve as the psychological whipping-boy for the social and domestic failures of her parents.

Miss Anthony tells this history of fame and frustration in the first mature biography of Louisa Alcott. Louisa's father has himself lately received a delayed credit in Odell Shepard's admirable "Pedlar's Progress." But while Professor Shepard made and substantiated many claims as to Bronson Alcott's value as an American type, he made no claims, and it would be hard to substantiate any, as to Bronson's value as a typical family man. It was, in fact, Professor Shepard's main defect that, resolutely hewing to his line, he ignored the worldly tragedies resulting from Bronson's quest of pure spirit. It seems to be the sad and absurd pattern of human progress that every absolute emphasis creates its absolute reaction, and Louisa indeed played Marx to Bronson's Hegel. In this sense Miss Anthony's new biography is a necessary and valuable supplementary portrait of one of New England's most interesting families.

I should like to say it was more than this. But the definitive biography of Louisa Alcott will also demand a little more than Miss Anthony gives us. Though one would value her realistic view of a period which is rapidly disappearing behind a veil of glamor, Miss Anthony makes no claim and little attempt to evaluate Louisa's age. "Thoreau, Emerson, Hawthorne," so the book jacket states, "the Henry Jameses, father and son, pass across the pages of Miss Anthony's book"—and this is precisely what they do. Miss Anthony, that is to say, deals almost exclusively with the personal history of Louisa. It is true that no previous biographer has adequately explained Louisa. But neither, and this is the disappointment of the book, does Miss Anthony. What is the crucial relationship of Bronson and Abigail Alcott with the enigmatic philanthropist Charles Lane? On this relationship, which so strongly impressed Louisa that twenty years later she writes of it in "Moods," Miss Anthony records that it was "a more complicated situation than she had any idea of." But need it also be too complicated for us to have any idea of? What is the root of the psychic ill which drives Louisa, dwelling as she did, with her bags and pill boxes, her paralysis and contemplations of suicide, in a "permanent borderland of hysteria," to general practitioner after general practitioner, specialist after specialist, homoeopathists, mental healers, osteopathists? The diagnosis of nervous disorders, Miss Anthony realizes, has made phenomenal progress since Louisa's day. "In the light of what is now known . . . it is supposable that Louisa Alcott's case might have been helped by more understanding." It is too late for Louisa's doctors to benefit by this progress, but is it too late, one wonders, for Louisa's biographers?

It is the general fate, however, of more profound books to be duller books, and Miss Anthony has not erred in both these respects. Presenting the facts of Louisa's life in her very readable fashion, she catches, if she does not always explain, the torments and domestic trials of America's charming apostle of domesticity. Miss Anthony has moreover, and this I think is the virtue of her book, sympathetically and acutely portrayed the sterile rewards of a life ruled by unreasoning conscience rather than reasonable pleasure. And in a time which is suffering from a recrudescence of the Victorian moral earnestness in an altered but none the less virulent form, it may not be amiss to mention that this thwarted life of "Duty's faithful child" points only to the faithlessness of duty. An excess of moral virtue is a psychological vice.

MAXWELL GEISMAR

Snakes in Iceland

LITERARY OPINION IN AMERICA. Edited by Morton Dauwen Zabel. Harper and Brothers. $3.25.

TO SO uncertain and fitful a subject as contemporary American criticism the mere appearance of a book like this lends a harmony and a dignity that are somewhat specious. Interesting as they are, none of these fifty essays seems an inevitable choice. It would be easy to suggest critics who could have been included; it would be impolite to point to articles that might have been left out. It might be possible to compile several other volumes of the same size and scope

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without duplicating material. And each of these volumes might present a different picture. So much should be said, not in disparagement of the anthologist, but in appreciation of the difficulties of his task. As a former editor of *Poetry* and a Catholic professor contributing to liberal journals, Morton Dauwen Zabel can be depended upon to do a tactful job. But the situation calls for detachment rather than tact.

Not that the book is calculated to provoke controversy. On the contrary, it makes a game effort to steer clear of the ethical, social, and historical preoccupations that have dominated our critical tradition. An introduction poses the main post-war issues—realism, humanism, Marxism—as more or less "external distractions," obstacles to the more exacting functions of criticism. The bulk of the volume consists of reviews of current books or plays and individual evaluations of modern writers, salvaged from the files. Aside from a few preliminary generalities by elder critics and occasional verbal manipulation by newer critics, no positions are stated and no one is permitted to make explicit "what literary quality and distinction are." With no guide to the forest, we are lost among the trees. Even the Marxists are represented by works of extenuation and modification and not by any positive assertion of doctrine. R. P. Blackmur, a sympathetic spokesman for the editor, glibly disposes of "separable content" as if there were such a thing; as if a writer did not choose attitudes and order experiences in the same way that he chooses words and orders rhythms.

But there is no danger of proceeding in an aesthetic vacuum. We are constantly encountering implicit values, not to say prejudices. Such far-fetched subjects as Viola Meynell and François Mauriac suggest that the principle of selection is not always catholic in the widest sense. The sole revaluation of a classic is a study of "Lycidas" by Paul Elmer More, probably the single figure of our time who could really get indignant about Milton's anti-episcopal views. In general, rebels, romantics, and realists fare badly. The extreme of abject conformism is reached by Yvor Winters, when he climaxes his praise of a poem by calling it "sufficient justification of Dr. Bridges's laureateship." Allen Tate interrupts his sermon on Hart Crane with a trick he learned from Eliot: "Professor Charles A. Beard has immense information about American history, but understands almost none of it." Now Beard may be vulnerable to honest attack, but he remains unscathed by petulant sniping of this sort. If only we could avoid distractions—

And concentrate on technique. Yet here, in spite of many brave words about "craft" and "tools," we are faced with a pitiful minimum of dissection and an intolerable deal of impressionism. *Eriger en lois ses impressions personnelles*, to build up their private responses into dogmas—this is all too disarmingly what most critics have in mind. Modern criticism is better equipped to distinguish than to judge, and Edmund Wilson's work derives its peculiar validity from his historical method and his Sainte-Beuve-like willingness to enter into the outlook and intentions of the author he is criticizing. If it were more detailed, it would be better still. Some of the writing in this book, notably Theodore Spencer's on Yeats and Robert Cantwell's on Sinclair Lewis, reveals close technical insight. But most of it is degustation, tasting and seeking adjectives. A suspicious eye, observing that fully half of these critics are, or were, practicing poets, might expect them (a) to display craftsmen's competence, or (b) to hold other writers up to a personal standard, and (c) to use words diffusely. Eliot assumed that Shakespeare had tried to write a "Waste Land" and concluded, logically enough, that "Hamlet" was a failure.

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The habit of generalizing a subjective impression and clothing it in concrete metaphor is often bewildering in a master of precise diction like Henry James. Under less literate auspices, this pursuit of the *mot juste* is likely to end up in a carnival of malapropisms. Since the editor has printed a generous portion of his own criticism, he will not object if we help ourselves to a random phrase—"the belabored hard-boiledness of Hemingway." Through mixed metaphor, and perhaps a pun, it is possible to extract some meaning out of this expression, but the context implies that the word "labored" would make less flash and more sense. The business of criticism is too prosaic for these critics. This is Marianne Moore on Wallace Stevens: "Upon the general marine volume of statement is set a parachute-spinnaker of verbiage which looms out like half a cantaloupe and gives the body of the theme the air of a fabled argosy advancing." At this stage, clearly, the critique casts no light on the poem, but the poem is necessary to explain the critique.

With Bourne, Sherman, and Parrington prematurely dead and Babbitt and More now belonging to the ages, with Eliot writing *Criterion* commentaries and Santayana sentimental novels, with Mencken turned stuffed-shirt and Brooks doing fancy-work, with the academic approach more myopic than ever and the journalistic racket more venal, with the *Dial* and *Hound and Horn* gone the way of little magazines, with our most distinguished regional writers flaunting their provincialism, with our sharpest Marxist minds blunted in factional friction, with ourselves forced to show serious consideration to such half-baked and indigestible books as "The Double Agent," "Reactionary Essays on Poetry and Ideas," "Primitivism and Decadence," and "Attitudes toward History," whom are we deceiving when we pretend to possess a body of literary opinion worthy of the name?

HARRY LEVIN

The Error of Philosophy

THE UNITY OF PHILOSOPHICAL EXPERIENCE. By Etienne Gilson. Charles Scribner's Sons. $2.75.

M. GILSON'S newest book is a most exciting history of philosophy. For it is written not only by a superb scholar—perhaps the greatest living historian of mediæval philosophy—but by a self-avowed dogmatist with an ax to grind and by a brilliant writer ruthlessly malicious toward what he takes to be the chief source of error of Western thought.

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Contrasted with the many failures stand Plato, Aristotle, and Thomas. These thinkers—"the three greatest metaphysicians who ever lived"—had no "system" of their own to propound. They were the servants of "perennial philosophy." They attempted to "relate reality . . . to the permanent principles in whose light all the changing problems of science, of ethics, and of art have to be solved." They looked "for an

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ultimate ground of all real and possible experience" under the guidance of "immutable principles"—and found it in the word "Being," spelled with a capital "B."

In spite of his extraordinary erudition M. Gilson permits his dogmatism to betray him. And yet the error into which it leads him is not difficult to demonstrate. Let us grant that philosophers have failed because they have attempted to explain the whole by one of its parts. Let us assume that the whole can be explained. And let us also assume that there are immutable principles and that these can be found. Is it not rather easy to show that Plato and Aristotle committed the very same error of which the philosophers who are said to have failed are accused? And if Aristotle, then Thomas. For Plato's thought borrowed its orientation from his interest in geometry. And Aristotle attempted to correct his teacher's errors by means of a poor biology and a physics at least as poor—both poor because verbal. And if Thomas was not guided by a positive science of which he was a master by right of his own contributions to it, it was simply because the best science within his reach was that of Aristotle.

Thus the perennial philosophy to which M. Gilson would bring us back is a philosophy grounded on an inadequate science twenty-five hundred years old. And this science is not rejected merely because antiquated but because it turned out to be, on prolonged examination, mostly verbiage. The forms and potencies and entelechies explain nothing. Positive science explains very little indeed, but it does it well. Is it a wonder then that we prefer our unstable certainties to Thomas's and M. Gilson's immutable principles?

ELISEO VIVAS

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Goethe's "Wilhelm Meister," this impulse subsequently showed itself in all the Western lands and the United States; and, maintaining itself though the earthquakes of our civilization, continues to prompt educational institutions and museums to nourish it.

It is plainly visible among the causes underpinning these art books, and not alone in the circumstance that they address themselves to persons of very moderate means who wish to come into relation with what exists in Rembrandt's play of light and Titian's solemn color. It is, to begin with, visible in the circumstance that these books respond to a contemporary need. Horowitz began publishing in connection with the educational program of the Viennese Socialists, and thereby grew aware, as did so many other Germanic publishers, of the desire among the working classes for good editions of good books, including "Das Kapital"; and began experimenting with the means at his disposal toward the end of filling and profiting by this need. Again, one sees it in the quality of his press's response to this situation: in the almost gratuitous fineness of his cheap editions and the love of the magnificent subjects and the desire evident in their pages to approach them as fully and closely as possible. They make plain the editors' and craftsmen's pleasure in self-education during the very process of working out their problems.

Lastly, one sees the persistence of this impetus in the circumstances of the series' appearance in the English and American markets, with good English translations of their various prefaces; and its ready welcome. There it seems to speak to us of its firm roots among us and of its endurance amid the almost intolerable uncertainties of life.

PAUL ROSENFELD

Pamphleteering Fiction

THE FLIVVER KING. By Upton Sinclair. United Automobile Workers of America. Ford Organizing Committee, New York. 25 cents.

I THINK it was Lewis Gannett who said that "The Flivver King" was a Model T as fiction. But like the Model T it goes. It carries the reader by the shortest route and at a fast clip from the idyllic valley of America before mass-production to the mountain top of finance capital and the belt-line, from the dirt road to the four-lane highway, from the sunny land of opportunity to the forbidding plateau of industrialization, where at least six million are permanently unemployed. Its principal characters are Henry Ford, who proves magnificently that the rugged individual can make good in America, and his workers, who demonstrate conclusively at whose expense he became the richest man in America. It might be described as the history of a great maker of automobiles and of the workers who came out at the little end of the horn.

Pamphleteering fiction being a vehicle with an actual destination and not an end in itself, it does not stop for inner subtleties either of character or motivation. Instead it makes use of ready-made character and motivation and it depends for its conviction on the reader's general knowledge of the facts and characters involved rather than on the writer's capacity for creation. In general this is true of "The Flivver King," but because of his special knowledge of Ford, Sinclair has given us news about him, and because he understands, out of his own experience and personality, the crusading yet practical, individualistic elements in Ford's nature, he makes

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of him far more than a mere symbol and succeeds to a certain extent in creating a character.

What Sinclair mainly creates in all his books, however, is not literature but a weapon. And since that is his intention he is not required to pass an artistic examination, though this is not to say that a weapon that was also literature would not be a better weapon—therein lies the difference between "The Flivver King" and, say, "Uncle Tom's Cabin." Mr. Sinclair uses a simple technique. He traces the history of Ford and of a family of Ford workers, represented in the last of three generations by a union organizer. At the end, the shifting, section by section, from the one to the other becomes so mechanical that interest flags, but in general the material with which he is dealing is so rich that its bare recital sets up in the reader's mind overtones of implication and association—such as one might experience in reading a synopsis of one's own life—that give the story a scope and momentum which it does not in itself, as a piece of writing, possess. It cannot fail to stir the imagination of the average automobile worker, whose life and problems it invokes; its simple and direct telling holds no difficulties even for the thousands of uneducated Southern hill-billies who comprise a large section of the United Automobile Workers and whose fresh pre-industrial spirit has made it one of the most lively and forward unions in the labor movement; and yet there is no suggestion of writing down.

It seems almost irrelevant to say that "The Flivver King" will not outlive its immediate uses, that it lacks the invisible dimension of a work of art, and that better books will be written about the rise of Henry Ford. It is a Model T, but its immediate uses are relevant and important. It is designed to be a handle with which automobile workers may obtain a grasp of the industry they live in and, more particularly, a weapon for unionizing the Ford empire. The U. A. W. undertook to sell 200,000 copies, and there is already talk of a new edition—which indicates that it fulfils the specifications and will play a part in the conquest.

MARGARET MARSHALL

The Whitmans of Oregon

MARCUS WHITMAN, M. D., PIONEER AND MARTYR. By Clifford Merrill Drury. The Caxton Printers: Caldwell, Idaho. $5.

THIS is a biography of both the Whitmans—Marcus and Narcissa—and the work has been admirably done. Dr. Drury has ransacked all the available sources and has brought to light much new material of value. With balanced judgment he has kept a straight course between the too credulous "Whitman-saved-Oregon" sect and the iconoclasts of the Bourne-Marshall following. Bourne and Marshall rendered a valuable service in deflating a number of myths that had grown up about Whitman, but they carried their campaign so far as to leave him a rather shadowy figure of no particular consequence. The mass of evidence, skilfully handled by the author, restores him to his true place. That his religious zeal was blended with a social or political motive—that increasingly he labored for the settlement of the Oregon country by immigration from the East—is now so firmly established that few dare deny it. What share he had in the "saving" of Oregon no one can definitely say. It is enough to know that the dream for the realization of which he arduously labored was a dream that came true.

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W. J. GHENT

DRAMA

"Our Town"

"OUR TOWN," Thornton Wilder's new play now current at the Morosco, is not easy to describe. On the surface it is only a few typical days in the life of some typical New England citizens as those days were lived in a typical village of a generation ago. As such it sounds commonplace enough, and so far as action goes that is what it is intended to be. But Mr. Wilder—who seemed to me so precious and so thin in "The Bridge of San Luis Rey"—has brooded over his subject and at last succeeded in communicating a mood as rich and tranquil and satisfying as it is hard to define.

Two attitudes toward the recent past are so familiar that one or the other seems almost inevitable, but the mood of "Our Town" is neither sentimental nor satiric. Here is no easy fun poked at the age of buggies and innocence, but here also is no sentimental overvaluation. Indeed, it is amazing how little Mr. Wilder claims for his villagers, how readily the local editor admits with a shake of the head that there is no "culture" in his town, and how calmly the commentator remarks at the wedding of his chief personages that the result of such unions is interesting "once in a thousand times." There is no tendency to claim for the homely virtues more than their due, no effort to hide the fact that such simple lives are led in ignorance of the heights as well as of the depths of possible human experience.

And if one asks what remains, what is left to feel when one feels neither condescension nor partisan warmth, the answer is simply that the mood of quiet contemplation which Mr. Wilder generates is one which would be hopelessly submerged by any suggestion of either satire or sentimentality. The spectacle of these undistinguished men and women living out their endlessly retold tale fascinates him, I think, not because undistinguished men and women are more admirable than others but because even they are men and women, because even undistinguished lives tease the imagination with a riddle not to be solved and stir it with an emotion not to be analyzed. Satire and sentiment alike are efforts to dispose of the problem by passing a judgment. The still sad music of humanity is most clearly audible when both are rejected.

The last scene of the play takes place in the village cemetery, to which a company of the recently dead welcom newcomer upon whom the calm of death has not y scended. Against their advice she returns to live ove

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one day of the past, but she soon rejoins them, convinced as they are that such attempts are useless. It is impossible to endure association with those who do not know how things are going to end; who, more intolerably still, are not aware of what ought to be the vividness and the poignancy of every moment. In that, I take it, lies the real moral. Only the dead can adequately realize either the wonder or the brevity of life.

The dramatic method is everywhere unconventional in the extreme. The piece is introduced by a soft-spoken master of ceremonies who remains on the stage throughout the performance to offer occasional comments, and the players act out their roles without benefit of scenery. But while such eccentric devices are commonly used for the purpose of heightening the colors of a play and tend frequently in the direction of the stridently insistent, Mr. Wilder uses them in the interest of a quiet intimacy. It is difficult to see how he could achieve the effect he desires by any other means, and fortune has provided him with a miracle of disarming ease in the performance of Frank Craven as the gentle commentator who bridges every awkward gap and holds the audience continuously under his spell. Without him the play would fall to pieces; with him it seems not so much to develop as to exist in a moment of eternity.

"On Borrowed Time" (Longacre Theater) seems to be competing with "Our Town" for the favor of public and press alike, but despite an admirable performance by Dudley Digges I found it sentimentally whimsical and altogether trying. Apparently there are many to whom the story of a doting grandfather who keeps Death up an apple tree is thoroughly satisfactory symbolism, but I was able to make little sense of it and found no compensating virtues in the humorously tender passages between the little boy and his grandfather. There is a great deal of stress upon the toilet and some considerable emphasis on the various scatalogical preoccupations of childhood, but unlike most members of the audience I am not among those in whom the spectacle of a little boy with his pants down stirs all the tender emotions.

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

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Justice Black's striking record since his elevation to the Supreme Court, as evidenced by his tradition-breaking dissents, will be presented by MAX LERNER.

The introductory article of a lively series about the columnists, by MARGARET MARSHALL, will appear next week.

PAUL Y. ANDERSON will continue his correspondence from Washington.

A thorough analysis of Collective Security will be contributed by LOUIS FISCHER.

The Bronx "slave-market" and similarly intolerable conditions elsewhere that have led to the beginnings of unionism for domestic workers will be described by EVELYN SEELEY.

From Europe will come an analysis of German economy, by ALEXANDER VIDAKOVIC.

ELIOT JANEWAY will present the results of his study of the auto industry and the depression, and of the quality of generalship displayed by automotive leaders.

BARBARA WERTHEIM will present a description of the character and methods of the French press that will prove enlightening to many American readers.

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sang in Stokowski's productions of "Les Noces" and "Oedipus Rex."

"Ballade" is also in the Parlophone subscription set repressed here by Decca (six records, $6), along with other songs of Moussorgsky, including the "Songs and Dances of Death." These are not so much sung as snarled and growled through clenched teeth melodramatically by Vladimir Rosing. Like the Gamut set this one is accompanied by a line-by-line transliteration and translation of the Russian texts.

Not only is there the sublimity Tovey speaks of in Schubert's great B-flat Piano Sonata, but the scherzo movement is one of the most ravishing pieces of music ever written, breath-taking in the rapid succession of its Schubertian miracles. As for the sublimity, the word carries with it a connotation of calm, but Ernst Victor Wolff's playing in the Columbia set (four records, $6) is nervous, over-intense, mannered. The performance of Beethoven's A-major Sonata for 'Cello and Piano that Emanuel Feuermann and Myra Hess have recorded for Columbia (three records, $5) is very beautiful; the older Casals-Schulhoff performance is, however, more dynamic and I like it better for that. On the fourth side of a Columbia two-record set ($3.25) is a fine performance of the Overture to "The Marriage of Figaro" by Beecham with the London Philharmonic; the other three sides are given to Brahms's "Tragic" Overture, also very well played.

Among the single records of Victor's special list Chaliapin's of the Monologue and Clock Scene from "Boris Godounov" ($2) takes first place, as any record of any part of his Boris must, particularly if it was made when his voice was still adequate to his purpose. In addition there is beautiful singing by Hüsch in Händel's "Dank sei Dir, Herr" and an aria from his "Julius Caesar" ($1.50); by Helge Roswaenge in Strauss's "Freundliche Vision" and "Ach, Lieb', ich muss nun scheiden" ($1.50); and by Ina Souez in "Ernani, involami" ($2). As for Victor's January list, it is headed by Toscanini's recording of the Overture to "Semiramide" (two records, $4.50), which is beyond anything I have ever heard in recorded orchestral performance. Then there is a fine performance by the Kolisch Quartet of Mozart's Quartet K. 589, which is not one of the most impressive of Mozart's works but also not one of the least (three records, $6.50). And finally three Bach Sonatas for Flute and Harpsichord (four records, $8), with beautiful flute-playing by Georges Barrère and less emphatic playing than usual by Yella Pessl, but with one exception—the Sonata No. 2 on the third record—dull music to my ears.

Timely has issued a single record ($2) of some agreeable music for lute and strings by John Dowland, played by Suzanne Bloch and the New York Simfonietta under Max Goberman.

In reply to recent questions I recommend (1) a record-changing mechanism—the Garrard, playing both sizes of records in one series for $59.50, or only one size at a time for $47.50, and to be had from the Garrard Sales Corporation, 17 Warren Street, New York; and (2) a needle—the Universal, the best of non-metallic semi-permanent needles in shape and durability, with a reproductive power approximating most closely to steel and falling short of it only by enough to reduce the harshness of present-day recording, and to be had from the Center Music Store, 1242 Sixth Avenue, New York. If however you prefer steel, the shape of the Victor half-tone shadowgraphed needle makes it superior to the Acton that I recommended last year.

B. H. HAGGIN

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Letters to the Editors

It Wouldn't Work

Dear Sirs: In the editorial entitled Wanted: Three-Year Plan in *The Nation* of January 15, you recommend to the government a plan for putting into effect the expressed wish of the President to raise our annual national income from 68 billion to 100 billion dollars. You say: "It would be far better to start with an estimate of national income and an estimate of potential consumption for the products of each basic industry based on that national income. Each industry . . . could then produce for an expanded market; and in the very process of doing so it would create the employment and purchasing capacity that would constitute such an expanded market." I wish to point out that "the very process" (of stepping up production) would *not* produce the "purchasing capacity" for buying back the goods thus produced.

It is a fallacy, and one that is dangerous and widespread, to assume that when ten men, or ten thousand men, are put to work in productive industry they will create a market which will absorb what they produce. It is a well-known fact that their wages and salaries will buy back only a portion of what they produce. The surplus is what makes all the trouble, and brings on depression. Your plan of expansion would simply aggravate the disease.

The government could not carry out this plan even if it wished to, for it has no power to fix and enforce production schedules.

WILLIAM RAOUL

Navesink, N. J., January 31

[Mr. Raoul raises two objections to our proposal. The first is economic, the second constitutional. We do not quarrel with his "well-known fact" that the wage outlay in any single industry will not in itself create a market for its goods. We have always objected to piecemeal attempts to solve the problems of an industry by increasing the wages and prices in it. The big trouble with such a procedure, however, is not the one Mr. Raoul points out. It is rather that since only one industry is dealt with at a time, and reemployment is not created in the rest of the industrial structure, the industry is trying to produce more for a market that remains essentially the same. If, however, reemployment were created in every industry more or less simultaneously, the general level of purchasing power would be raised for all products, and a demand would be created not only for the finished products but for the raw and half-finished materials along the way. This is the heart of the argument for a planned economy. As for the constitutional objections, Mr. Raoul will do well to remember that if the Supreme Court follows John Marshall's conception of the scope of national powers, economic planning may easily pass muster as part of the Congressional function. Whether we shall have a court liberal enough to follow such an old Federalist as Marshall is another question.—EDITORS THE NATION.]

Chicago Cares a Little

Dear Sirs: Milton Mayer's Chicago Doesn't Care in *The Nation* of February 5 is a good job on a big subject, but some of its statements seem unjustified. I feel Mr. Mayer left the rails at the following points:

1. When he says, "Chicago won't get reform, because it doesn't want it. There isn't a citizens' organization in town." And when he dismisses the Labor Party as a paper organization and Labor's Non-Partisan League as without friends. Finally, when he writes, "The reform movement in Chicago consists of serious groups of little thinkers sitting around" talking about New York.

If Mr. Mayer meant that these groups will not swing the next election, he's right, but his language isn't accurate. The Labor Party and Labor's Non-Partisan League have fair prospects of developing strength quickly; at present, they are well away from a paper basis. As to reform groups, the record shows they won a big battle for permanent registration in 1936; this took more than sitting and talking. The drive for a city manager and the P. R. system of voting has substantial support, with 200,000 Chicagoans backing the movement in such organizations as the Illinois League of Women Voters and the Chicago City Manager Committee.

2. Mr. Mayer is unfair in making the Civic Federation appear wholly reactionary and in comparing it with the New York committee which approved Tweed's bookkeeping. The federation proposed a state income tax as lately as 1933, has urged a separate personalty tax after amendment of the Illinois constitution, and has indorsed the present effort to assess personal property. It has perennially denounced city accountings, and last month issued a blast about the books of the Board of Education.

ROBERT E. ACKERBERG, JR.

Chicago, February 9

Testimony from the Fo'c'sle

Dear Sirs: As one who has been to sea in a fo'c'sle rather than a steamer chair, I was much interested in the recent denunciations of seamen made to the Senate Commerce Committee's subcommittee on maritime labor conditions. In the light of my sea experience, the most significant thing anent the testimony has been overlooked. That is that all the criticism has been of men working in passenger vessels.

I have worked on passenger ships and freighters. The differences between the men employed on them are enormous. Those I met on the freighters, tankers, and transports would take a job on a passenger ship only as an absolutely last resort. Because I have worked on a passenger ship to the Orient, the President Pierce, I believe it is possible that some of the charges placed against the personnel of the President Hoover after she ran aground are true. Out of the dozen of us in the wipers' fo'c'sle of the Pierce, two were graduates of a Honolulu reform school, one had been cashiered from the Marine Corps, and one we took on at Manila had just been released from jail after serving sentence for opium smuggling.

But it only took one trip on that ship to learn why such men were there. The Pierce was my second ship and a decided shock after the six months I spent on my first, the Utacarbon, which paid higher than average wages and provided good, clean quarters and decent working conditions. The crew's quarters of the Pierce would have made a brute out of the Savior. The fo'c'sles were small rooms crowded with as many narrow bunks as possible. Ventilation was by means of the customary portholes, but,

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since fo'c'sles are on a deck just slightly above water level, they had to be "dogged," or closed, whenever the weather was at all rough.

There were approximately thirty-five men in the wipers and firemen section of the "black gang" on that ship, and our bathroom contained two toilets, one shower, and two washstands. If you got tired of waiting for a chance at the shower after coming off watch, you could take a bath in a bucket of water, as every sailor has learned to do.

As for the food, you had to force yourself to eat it after eight hours of hard manual labor. The oranges and apples of the weekly fruit ration were invariably half spoiled. The nearest my thoughts ever came to mutiny was when I saw crates of oranges from the passengers' supplies, which had been allowed to spoil, being thrown overboard as we neared San Francisco. The soup was water with a few shreds of vegetables floating in it, and—this is no sailing-ship yarn—we had to brush weevils off the crackers that were served with it.

To judge the entire merchant marine by the passenger ships, however, would be utter folly. It also strikes me as folly to aim programs for correcting the present conditions, such as Joseph P. Kennedy's three-point plan, at the men. I am convinced that the ship owners are to blame for most of the present evils. They have gone on for years enlarging cargo space and improving passenger accommodations, while doing their best to keep the men in the same all-around conditions as sailors had in 1850.

JACK Y. QUAYLE, JR.

Washington, February 10

Let the Public Be Served

Dear Sirs: Your editorial Does the Boycott Hurt American Labor? in your issue of February 5 was splendid. I cannot help commenting on the statement of the National Association of Hosiery Manufacturers quoted by Professor Eugene Staley—"We are prepared to furnish the American public with whatever they desire in the line of hosiery." As the late President Woodrow Wilson once said, "Business was made for society, not society for business." It is the function of manufacturers to make what the public wants and not make the public want what they deem it wise for the public to want. It seems to me that if business in general would wake up to that fundamental fact a lot of worries would be over. H. J. FULLER

Milford, Conn., February 8

Correcting an Error

Dear Sirs: I want to acknowledge with thanks your generous offer of an apology in print for publishing an unfounded attack of a certain Mr. Brody against me. In a letter to the editors, published in *The Nation* of February 12 under the heading Visas for Liberals, he said: "Also the Misses Suzanne La Follette and Anita Brenner, who have raged in the columns of *The Nation* against the bourgeois Loyalist government for shadowboxing with Franco instead of immediately establishing communism in Spain." You assure me that by the simple method of going through your own files it was easy to establish the falsehood of this severe accusation. Though I am convinced that every unbiased reader of Mr. Brody's letter recognized his statement as slander at the first glance, I thank you nevertheless for having taken the trouble to check up. I am satisfied. I shall be more so if you will follow in future a sound principle of editorial efficiency: check *before* printing.

May I add for the sake of the record that I have nowhere done what Mr. Brody's crank letter accused me of doing. On the other hand I collected a considerable amount of money for *The Nation's* Food Ship for Loyalist Spain.

SUZANNE LA FOLLETTE

New York, February 12

[While the editors do not accept responsibility for the interpretations of those whose letters they print, they wish to express their regret over an error of fact in Mr. Brody's statement. In justice to Miss La Follette they are glad to point out that she has not written anything on the subject of the Spanish war in the columns of *The Nation*. The editors regard the letter section as a battleground for their readers, and in consequence subject those pages to less of that checking process which they intensively apply elsewhere in the magazine and which they are proud to agree with Miss La Follette is a "sound principle of editorial efficiency."]

Texas Labor History

Dear Sirs: Professor Ruth A. Allen of the Department of Economics, University of Texas, is gathering material for a history of the labor movement in Texas and would like very much to hear from anyone having information about the Southwest Railway Strike of 1886 under the Knights of Labor, or about Martin Irons, one of the leaders of the strike. Any material lent for copying and examination will be promptly returned. It should be addressed to P. O. Box 1695, University Station, Austin, Texas.

BEN L. OWENS

Austin, Texas, January 26

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